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VOL. III.





COMMENTARY  
ON THE  
PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,

BY THE LATE  
DR. GEORG HEINRICH AUGUST VON EWALD,  
*Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Göttingen.*

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Translated by  
J. FREDERICK SMITH.

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VOL. III.  
NAHÚM, SSEPHANYA, HABAQQŪQ, "ZAKHARYA" XII.-XIV., YÉREMYÁ.



WILLIAMS AND NORGATE,  
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# COMMENTARY

ON THE BOOKS OF

NAHÛM, SSEPHANYA, HABAQQUQ,  
"ZAKHARYA" XII.-XIV., YÉREMYÁ

WITH TRANSLATION,

BY THE LATE

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To save space to permit the work to be completed in two more volumes, a smaller type has been adopted for the commentary, and it has been placed below the text. The remaining volumes will be divided as follows:—Vol. IV. Ezekiel, “Isaiah” xl.—lxvi.; Vol. V. Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Jonah, Baruch, Daniel.





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### III. PROPHETS OF THE LATER PERIOD.

#### A.—DOWN TO THE END OF THE CAPTIVITY.

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##### 1. NAHÛM.

1. Nahûm's prophecy must have been occasioned by the advance of powerful enemies upon Ninevêh. It is true the descriptions of the capture and sacking of Ninevêh flow, as here given, from a purely prophetic view of things, rather than from actual experience. At the same time, the entire structure and character of this prophecy show that a hostile march upon Ninevêh was in active progress, that the border fortresses were already falling, iii. 12, 13, and the kingdom appeared to be abandoned of its leaders and lost beyond recovery, iii. 18, 19. The entire prophecy has as its basis the unmistakable peril in which Ninevêh is placed; and the peculiarly prophetic element of it is the way in which this evident danger is viewed in its relation to eternal truths.

No less certain is it that Nahûm must with his own eyes have seen the danger in his immediate neighbourhood, as a descendant of the Israelites that had been at some time carried into Assyria. This is clear from the general colouring of the little book; it centres round Ninevêh with a fulness of detail such as no earlier oracle presents with regard to a foreign nation, and only incidentally, i. 13—ii. 3, refers to the kingdom of Yuda which alone continues to exist in Palestine; and whilst nothing points to the supposition that Nahûm wrote in Yuda, it follows from the words, ii. 1, comp. Isa. lii. 7, that the

speaker was far distant from Jerusalem and Yuda. How differently a prophet would have spoken at Jerusalem about that time with reference to Ninevéh, may be seen from the very dissimilar tone of the words, Sseph. ii. 13-15. Further, Nahûm exhibits an acquaintance with Assyrian affairs such as no other prophet possesses; his descriptions of things in this greatly reduced kingdom are so vivid that it seems as if he must himself have seen them all, and as dwelling not far from Ninevéh had taken the deepest interest in its fortunes; even the language bears traces of this. Apart from certain rare forms in Hebrew, *e.g.*, נִיָּה instead of נִיָּה, ii. 14, we refer here especially to the Assyrian words which he uses, which nowhere else occur in the older prophets who wrote in Palestine, and could only in the neighbourhood of Ninevéh be introduced into the Hebrew language as customary words: הַצֵּב according to the Massoretic punctuation, ii. 8, מִנִּזָּר and מַסֵּר, iii. 17, of which words only the last is repeated from Nahûm by a later prophet, Jer. li. 27. Ancient translators found the explanation of these words difficult, and we shall also feel the difficulty until some reliable monuments of the ancient Assyrian language have been discovered, or the cuneiform inscriptions which have been found in those districts have been deciphered with certainty. Judging from the context alone, הַצֵּב must denote the name of the Queen; מַסֵּר has in Jer. li. 27, pretty much the meaning of a *captain*, superior, and appears to have passed into the later Jewish language with this signification: מִנִּזָּר, since the context of iii. 17 points to warriors, is probably a mercenary soldier. In addition to these facts, we have the notification of the ancient heading, i. 1, that Nahûm was from Elqôsh, which is without doubt the little town Alqûsh which is still found on the Tigris, not far from Mosul, a native of which place I myself spoke with at Rome in the year 1836. Though we decline to attach any weight to the grave of the prophet Nahûm which is shown there, since it was probably built in Christian times, all the above indications are plainly in favour of this as the

locality of the prophet's city, whilst the Christian Fathers gave themselves great trouble in vainly endeavouring to point out a city of this name in Galilee or Judea. We have therefore in Nahûm the rare but certain example of a prophet living in the Assyrian exile, and may draw thence the inference that many more Assyrian exiles remained zealously devoted to the ancient religion which was still kept up in Yuda.

2. We must refer to history for the particular time when Ninevêh was thus threatened. At the time when Sancherib's power in the South declined, Isa. xxxvii., Ninevêh does not appear to have been overrun by any hostile army: the Assyrian power was in the North still too great to suffer this. It is true Nahûm alludes to Sancherib, i. 11, 12, but as to some one who had long ago passed away, and as if quite different times had arrived.\*—Another indication of the time is the mention of the destruction of Egyptian Thebes, iii. 8-10, an event which must have been the last of the kind in the memory of the writer; but unfortunately this event remains at present in a condition of historical indistinctness. From the description of it all that clearly appears is, that the destruction did not come from the South, since the Ethiopians are mentioned at the head of the allies of Thebes. Whether the Assyrians were the conquerors or not, does not follow with any certainty from Isa. xx., and there is no indication in our passage pointing to that conclusion: for how natural would be the thought that Nineveh must be now overtaken by the same doom which it had once prepared for Thebes! And yet the destruction of Thebes is described as if the Assyrians had had no share in it! This destruction of Thebes appears therefore to have been occasioned by the serious internal troubles of Egypt in the first half of the seventh century, a period of which we at present know very little, comp. Isa. xix.

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\* According to all appearances there is an echo of Nahûm's words, Jer. xlv. 9: but Yéremyá as compared with Nahûm, who might be quite advanced in years by 636 B.C., is a much younger prophet. The efforts to make him a contemporary of Sancherib's must be unsuccessful.



We should in that case be brought a considerable way down in the seventh century !\*

As a fact the first serious siege of Ninevéh is that under the Median King Phraortes, Herod i. 102, which according to Eusebius, the Chron. Arm., tom. ii. p. 185-87, was in the year 636 B.C., and according to all appearance was the cause of great commotions and revolutions amongst the nations of upper Asia, the inroads of the Scythians having unmistakably an intimate connection with it. The Medes, at that time a nation of growing power and pristine vigour, had already subjugated many other northern peoples and deprived the Assyrians of all their allies, a description which fully accords with our prophecy. They then advanced with a great army against Ninevéh. Although this extensive and well fortified city was not at once taken, but Phraortes fell in the campaign, and the Medes subsequently marched twice against the city before it was captured, it still does not follow that the first attack was not as threatening as possible; without doubt it was the commencement of a siege under the final charges of which, after some reverses, Ninevéh very soon fell. There is therefore no difficulty in supposing that Nahûm wrote down his prophecy precisely during the first advance of Phraortes; it is true he anticipates that this danger will be the first and last, i. 9-12, but it could not be his business to predict the really unimportant vicissitudes which were still possible. It follows from the tone and manner of the prophet that Ninevéh had up to that time never been threatened and besieged, and that this appearance of a great army marching against the city was something quite new.

3. The true import of the prophecy lies in the way in which the prophet looks upon this coming event of his time in the light of the eternal truths of Yahvé. The kingdom of the Assyrians had become great in earlier times almost solely by

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\* Compare my subsequent judgment on this passage, *History of Israel*, iv. 240 (iii. 761, and 848.) The event is manifestly alluded to Seph. ii. 12.

means of rude force, destruction, and plunder, and in later times it is kept up only by the equivocal arts of procuring allies and extending its trade and intercourse which are often of an exceedingly immoral nature; a sure foundation of national life has never been laid, and accordingly no defence against threatening foreign or domestic ruin. It is true the capital of what was once an extensive empire has retained its prosperity; but in the presence of eternal righteousness there is no such thing as punishment being finally annulled as long as the sin is not inwardly put away and the entire disposition remains unchanged; it may be late, but with the greater certainty and violence the punishment will ultimately fall upon the guilty; and this Ninevéh will find illustrated in her own case, inasmuch as she never rose to the knowledge of the true God, but, on the contrary, her king once threatened to destroy with Jerusalem the true religion! But now true deliverance is no longer within her reach, as the prophet correctly foresees and boldly declares.

Such thoughts as these the piece unfolds exhaustively, vividly, and forcibly. It is true we find in this prophet, who belongs to the later prophets, a diminution of inward power and wealth of thought; we already meet with some things borrowed from older oracles. Nevertheless, many descriptions are still extremely vivid and truly poetic, as if the great phenomenon gave even to the language elevation and fire. The art used in presenting and exhaustively handling the entire matter is equally excellent. The entire prophecy falls into eight symmetrical strophes, each of 5-6 Massoretic verses. The first strophe begins with lofty calmness and dignity, presenting the general fundamental truth, whilst the second makes the application of it to Ninevéh, which must now supply an example of divine punishment, and the third casts by anticipation a comforting glance upon Yuda. After the subject has been thus introduced from all sides by the first three strophes, the discourse rises in the next three to its greatest elevation, in

order to project a distinct picture of the manner in which the punishment will now actually come; the fourth strophe describes in pictures of great force and vividness the storming of the effeminate city, the fifth the sack of the rich city, the sixth the repeated punishment and disgracing of the city devoted to harlotry. The last two strophes gradually sink from the elevation of the preceding ones to greater calmness: the seventh in a historical survey compares the fate of Thebes with that about to befall Ninevéh, and the eighth returns with sarcastic self-possession and repose to the thought with which the book began, that is, the necessity that Ninevéh should fall.

i.

1 The High Oracle concerning Nineveh—Book of the Prophecy of Nahûm the Elqôshite.

#### I. 1.

A zealous\* and revenging God is Yahvé, revenging [is] Yahvé and wielding wrath; | revenging is Yahvé towards his oppressors, he forgetting nothing towards his enemies. || — Yahvé is longsuffering and of great might, but unpunished leaveth he nothing: | Yahvé in storm and tempest is his way, and clouds the dust of his feet: || who rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry, and all the streams to fail, | Bashan withereth  
5 and Karmel, and Lebanon's bloom withereth; || mountains shake before him and the hills melt, | and the earth starteth back before him, the ground with all that dwell thereon. || —

It is clear that the second heading, i, 1, could not have been added by the same hand immediately after the first, since it has no close connection with the first, is in itself complete, and has every

appearance of being the true original heading whose proper place is first. The first heading is therefore from a later hand; comp. vol. I. p. 99.

I. 1. The fundamental thought of the entire oracle, the truth that no historical crime can ever as a crime be forgotten by Yahvé through the flight of

time, but must in all cases, either sooner or later, be punished by the living and all-observing God, is brought forward briefly and with dignified repose at the

\* Comp. the Author's examination of this side of Yahvé's nature in his last work, *Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, Vol. II. p. 197.—Tr.



Before his rage who will stand? and who remain in the heat of his anger? | his zeal is poured out like fire, and the rocks rend before him! ||

## 2.

Good is Yahvé, a refuge in the day of distress, | and knoweth them that trust in him: || but with an overswelling flood will he make an utter end of her place, | and his enemies pursue into darkness! || —What think ye of Yahvé? The utter end  
10 maketh he! | not twice will the distress arise. || Let them be even thickset as thorns, and drenched as they drink; | they will be consumed as fully dry stubble! || —From thee (Ninevéh!) went forth he that devised against Yahvé evil, | that counselled wickedness? || Thus saith Yahvé “if they were once intact and so many, and yet were so mown down and he passed away: | thus will I humble thee without having to humble thee again! ||

very commencement, ver. 2; the second half of the verse supplies the explanation and limitation of the general utterance of the first half. In the further explanation, vv. 3-5, it is then said, that Yahvé is indeed long suffering and powerful, needing not, because he is so powerful, to hasten his punishments, but not on that account does he leave anything unpunished, wherever and however long an unatoned sin may be present (from Ex. xxxiv. 7; Num. xiv. 18); on the contrary, it must at last take place, he comes in the tempest

borne upon the clouds and forthwith the earth shakes before him, from the sea, whose waves as well as all the verdure of the earth dry up before the hot wind of his wrath (Ex. xv. 8-10), unto the mountains that are at the same time overtaken by the earthquake, Amos i. 2, so that men also will be compelled to tremble. נשׁא as in Hos. xiii. 1. If he, whom burning winds and earthquakes serve, once smites the guilty, how can he possibly stand? Thus ver. 6 makes the transition to the particular case which immediately follows.

2. It is true, this strophe calmly begins, vv. 7, 8, Yahvé is essentially good, ready to help and not overlooking those whose hearts are turned to him: but with the resistless might of an overflowing and devastating stream he will destroy *her* place (the place of Ninevéh) and chase his enemies, the incorrigible Ninevites, into hell. Thus the discourse has imperceptibly arrived at its main subject, to pursue it further, and to show more definitely, in the first place, the truth of this surprising declaration that

Ninevéh is about to come to an end. Two causes render this danger really so great: (1) vv. 9, 10, because Yahvé threatens it. What think ye of Yahvé? Do ye suppose that he is in sport? or that he cannot execute his threat? Not so: he is in reality about to make an end! All the great things that he does he does but once, never becoming untrue to himself during the course of an action as men often do; not twice, therefore, will this distress arise (comp. ver. 12), he is too serious and too power-

## 3.

- And now will I break his yoke from upon thee, | and thy fetters will I burst asunder [O Ssion!] And concerning thee [O Assyrian!] hath Yahvé commanded “a seed shall not come from thy name any more, | from the house of thy God will I cut off graven and molten image, making them thy grave because thou art found wanting!” || —Behold upon the mountains
- ii. the feet of the messenger of good proclaiming salvation: “keep Yuda thy feasts, pay thy vows! for not any more will the wicked pass into thee, utterly is he destroyed!” || The hammer ascendeth before thy face [O Assyrian!] “attention to the fortress-tower! look out at the way, | gird the loins, strengthen the might greatly!” || for Yahvé restoreth Yaqob’s excellency as that of Israel, | because robbers robbed them and destroyed their vines. ||

ful for that! Resistance is of no avail: suppose they be (״ב *ut sint* § 362 *b*) interwoven *unto*, that is, even as, thorn-bushes, twisted, treacherous and cunning, so that they cannot be approached, and it is hateful to have anything to do with them, and suppose they be in accordance with their drinking (Hos. iv. 18), their debauchery, as it were drenched in wine, and thereby so wet that fire appears unable to hurt them—yet that divine fire approaches to devour them as easily as completely dry stubble! Ps. lviii. 10. (2) vv. 11, 12, because in the past that godless hero went forth from Ninevéh, whose design it was to destroy with the temple at Jerusalem the true religion, that is Sancherib, who is intended in ver. 11, Isa. xxxvi, and xxxvii. Did this

3. The last strophe, vv. 11, 12, prepares for the transition to Yuda, which is become free and may rejoice in proportion as Ninevéh is irremediably lost; at least there were still many exiles on the Tigris who only got quite free by the destruction of Ninevéh. With great animation, therefore, Nahúm here varies the person addressed, holding a place between the two parties and turning

thing that now seems scarcely credible really happen(hence the question ver. 11)? but if at that time the Assyrians, when they were in possession of their full strength, and had not, as now, lost their allies, and with such a great army, were still so mown down, as it were (Amos vii. 1; Isa. vii. 20; xviii. 4, 5), annihilated, a well known fact, and *he* (Sancherib) immediately after also disappeared, fell (at least he was soon afterwards slain in Assyria, Isa. xxxvii. 38) —how much more will the present humiliation of the proud city be the last, no further one being necessary, ver. 12, (comp. 1 Sam. xxvi. 8; 2 Sam. xx. 10). Thus this description returns to ver. 9 *c*.

now to this and then to that; when the person is not indicated in a more express manner in the variation, there is at least a change in the pronoun of the second persons, the fem. sing. being used in the case of Yuda and the masc. in the case of the Assyrians; accordingly פְּנִיָּה should be read instead of פְּנִיָּה; comp. the same person in the imperative of this very verse. But it is

## II. 4.

The shield of his heroes is reddened, the men of the army in purple, in flashing fire the chariots as soon as he draweth them up | —and the spears brandished ! || —In the streets the chariots rattle, run each other down in the highways, | their appearance like the torches, like the lightnings running to and fro ; || he remembereth his nobles, they stumble in their passage, | hasten to its wall, and drawn up is the vanguard ! || —The gates of the streams are opened, | and the palace is in commotion ; || and already Hussab [the queen] hath been taken captive, lifted up,\* | whilst her maids moan aloud like doves, beating upon their hearts. || Though Ninevéh is as a waterpool since it is : | yet they flee ; “stand ye, stand !” but no one turneth.

not necessary on that account to read נצור also, since the *inf. abs.* can quite well interchange with the *imper.* in the structure of the verse-members, comp. iii. 15. Thus this deliverance occurs first at vv. 13, 14 ; but here also the idolatry is briefly alluded to on account of the contrasts to Yuda, and it is said that the idols instead of rendering help will prove the grave of their worshippers, including their worshippers in their own fall ; קלור is further elaborated, Dan. v. 25.—The second contrast ii. 1, 2, is more animated. Already it seems to this prophet in the exile that the messenger of this glad tidings will soon appear upon the mountains near Jerusalem, to be recognized by his bearing and haste as the messenger of victory, Isa. lii. 7 ; comp. Ez. vi. 2 sq. ; xxxvi. 1 sq. On the other hand, where already the hammer, *i. e.* the victor, conqueror (the

king of the Medes) advances unhindered upon Ninevéh this hopelessly lost city is derisively encouraged to review its prospects, to look at tower and road for the purpose of ascertaining whether an enemy is visible from the former or on the latter, and to keep up a good heart—as if such foresight and such courageous resolve could be of any further use ! iii. 13, 14 ; Isa. xxi. 5. Certainly the Assyrian had need of preparation and of courage, since Yahvé has just now determined to restore the ancient eminence of the two kingdoms of Yuda and Israel, here strangely called Yaqob and Israel, for the reason that fierce robbers (the Assyrians) once completely ransacked them and laid waste their tender vines, *i. e.* their fair community, with rude hands ! following Isa. xvi. 7, 8. This suffices with regard to the relation of Ninevéh to Israel.

II. 4. If according to these considerations Ninevéh must fall, *how* will it fall ? what will be the course that this event will take, and what phases will this phenomenon pass through ? Plainly this great event which is about to take place will unfold itself in accordance with the

character of this kingdom ! and already the prophetic eye most vividly foresees in this strophe the course of affairs at the siege, and there arises the most telling description of the way in which the two hostile parties will mutually conduct themselves at the decisive mo-

\* Germ. *aufgeladen* lit. *loaded*, see the paraphrase.—Tr.

## 5.

- 10 “Rob ye silver, rob ye gold!” since there is no end of the display, the glory of all costly gear! || Desert and desolation and devastation! | with fainting heart and knocking together of their knees and trembling in all loins, and the face of all hath gathered redness! || —Where is the lions’ home, and what was a feeding place for bold lions, | whither went he-lion, she-lion, the lion’s whelp | by no one made afraid; || the lion that robbed enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, | so that he filled with prey his holes, his dens with spoil? || Behold I will thee! saith Yahvé of Hosts, and burn in smoke thy chariots, and thy lions will the sword devour; | and I cut off from the earth thy prey, so that there will not be any more heard the  
 iii. voice of thy ambassadors! || Woe unto thee city of blood, |  
 1. entirely full of lying, of violence, robbery not departing! ||

ment. On the one side, v. 4, the heroes of the king of the Medes, mentioned ver. 2, advance in excellent armour, with glittering shields (Isa. xxi. 5) and in bright garments, as well as with flashing chariots, armed with scythes, shining still more brightly in the sunlight, and already in their eagerness to fight they swing their spears. פלדות are sparks, comp. Syriac *beltsátsithô*, Arabic *bard*. On the other side, vv. 5, 6, it is true the Ninevites, now grown effeminate, seek to arm themselves at the appearance of danger, in terrible haste the chariots fly through the streets and squares for the purpose of collecting together, as is graphically described ver. 5; the effeminate, careless Assyrian king, at last aroused from his slumber, remembers the nobles that surround him, who now wait for his command to advance; now they hasten to the wall to defend it, stumbling in their haste and fear, provisionally the vanguard הסכד a military term, LXX have correctly,

5. Thus there is nothing more to prevent the sack of the enormously rich city; on the part of the enemy nothing but an uninterrupted plunder of all

προφυλακαί) is drawn up, and thus it is believed that the city is secure from a surprise and a certain amount of repose is once more obtained.—But then, vv. 7-9, suddenly the city, which is so well defended by streams or aqueducts from the Tigris (comp. iii. 8; Is. xxxiii. 21), is opened, the conquerors irresistibly pour in, at once make for the palace which has been thrown into the greatest commotion; and already the queen, in the midst of the lamentations of her maids, is taken captive, placed upon the chariot to be carried off. What a scene! Ninevéh is from her earliest days (§ 297 c) like an inexhaustible reservoir of water as regards population: and yet they all flee and none can stop them! The fact that ver. 8 the queen only is mentioned and not the king, accords with the Greek legends, that the queens of Ninevéh were generally of greater importance than the kings: Semiramis and Sardanapalus!

precious treasures, on the part of the conquered nothing but unbounded fear and terror and confusion! after, Hos. xiii. 15; Joel ii. 6; תבונה, LXX. κόσμος



## 6.

Hark the whip and hark the rattling of wheels ! | and chasing horse and dancing chariots, || assaulting horsemen, and flaming sword and flashing spear, | and abundance of slain and oversupply of dead, no end of the corpses, | they stumble upon their corpses ! || —on account of the many harlotries of the harlot, of the well-favoured one rich in enchantment, | who sold the nations by her harlotries, and tribes by her enchantments. || —Behold I will thee ! saith Yahvé of Hosts, and uncover thy skirts before thy face, | and show nations thy nakedness, and kingdoms thy shame ; || and cast upon thee abominable things and dishonour thee, | make thee as a spectacle, || so that whoever seeth thee fleeth from thee, and saith :

*Laid waste is Ninevéh ! O who will pity thee ?*

*Whence shall I find comforters for thee ?*

is further explained simply by the following כבד.—But in fact nothing else could be looked for, vv. 12-14 ; Ninevéh had been from of old the place where the Assyrian warriors and tyrants had hidden the spoil which they had taken from the whole world, and that this spoil should again become spoil is only what higher justice demands. Accordingly the exclamation follows as if with joy, vv. 12, 13 : Where is now the nest of thieves, whither the race of lions so long resorted to hide and to devour their booty ? and the higher answer to this question is, ver. 14, an eternal retributive justice is in force, in

6. As there are several chief transgressions that Ninevéh has been guilty of and accordingly several causes of her castigation, her castigators also, as may be easily imagined where barbarous armies are concerned, advance in several successive bands. The prophetic eye therefore now beholds a fresh body of warriors breaking into the city with greater ease, vv. 2, 3, to punish it afresh and as it were for another transgression. At first there is heard in the distance

order that from henceforth the terrible voice of the Assyrian ambassadors may not be heard in the oppressed lands ! These ambassadors were the representative legates of the king, who were sent into the subjugated countries to execute royal commands, collect tribute, etc. Isa. xxx. 4.—Therefore only woe can be proclaimed over this city, which has done to it only what it had done to other cities ! iii. 1. It appears from Hab. ii. 19 also that חר' does not necessarily stand at the commencement of a strophe. לא ימ' is a circumstantial clause, § 341.

the prelude of a new company advancing, ver. 2, and soon it comes nearer casting everything down, ver. 3 ; העלה appears to denote as a military term the presentation of arms, or preparation for battle ; whence the flash of the bared weapons immediately follows. Comp. Jer. xli. 4, 9 ; li. 27. As a second transgression appears Ninevéh's trade, under the entirely new figure of fornication with other nations. The previous prophets speak of Israel only as a harlot

## III. 7.

Art thou then better than Nô-Amôn? which lay by streams, surrounded by water, | whose rampart was a defence from sea to sea; || Kûsh was her strength with Egypt without end, | Pât and Libyans were counted in her help: || also she went away captive into banishment, also her children were dashed in pieces at the corners of all streets, | and upon her nobles the lot was cast, all her magnates were bound in chains! || —Also thou shalt become drunk, shalt become insensible,\* also thou shalt seek refuge from the enemy! || all thy fortresses are fig-trees with early figs: | if they are shaken they fall upon the mouth of the eater. || Behold thy people are women in thy midst, to thine enemies will be opened thy country's gates, | fire devoureth thy bars! ||

on account of its unfaithfulness as a community to Yahvé. Later prophets apply the figure to every heathen city, inasmuch as degenerate heathenism is as such unfaithfulness to the true God, "Isa." xlvii. The meaning of such similes, however, is capable of extension. An old harlot endeavours to keep up her prosperity by means of ignoble arts of every kind: accordingly great heathen mercantile cities especially (such as Ninevéh, comp. ver. 16) were so called, inasmuch as in trade when it has become mere greed of gain no means are too bad, and no art or seduction too dishonourable for the purpose of maintaining traffic with foreign cities, and a

city of this kind prefers to sell, *i.e.* to see sunk in slavery and death, whole nations through its ignoble arts to abstention from such disgraceful commercial intercourse, ver. 4; Isa. xlvii. 12-14; xxiii. 15-17; Rev. xviii. And the punishment accords with the simile, the city being in the end treated as an irreclaimable harlot, from whom all external adornment is torn off, so that she is presented to the world in that outward disgrace which answers to her true character, and she who is publicly insulted becomes a common spectacle and abomination, *Σέαρρον*, 1 Cor. iv. 9; Zech. v. 5-11; comp. also *Dichter des Alten Bundes*, I. p. 71 sq.

III. 7. A wider historical survey. Wilt thou claim a better fate than Nô-Amôn, *i.e.* Diospolis, or Thebes, in Egypt, a capital city, equally large and equally well defended by the Nile and its artificial water-channels, and further protected by powerful allies, which had notwithstanding all this also to suffer all the horrors of a siege, and upon

whose nobles as captives the lot of the conqueror was cast? ים מים (to be connected contrary to the accents) is an abbreviated phrase as in the similar instance of Mic. vii. 12, although the accents give another sense to the words, but to all appearance incorrectly; comp. ii. 7; Ps. xlviii. 14; § 349 b. The suff. of the 2nd per. ver. 9, is certainly

\* The author's translation is: *sollst schwarz vor den augen werden*. Comp. the Homeric phrase: *σκότος ὅσσε κάλυπεν*, "Nacht umhülte die Augen."—*Tr.*

## 8.

Water of the siege draw for thee, fortify thy citadels, | go into the mire, tread into the clay, lay hold upon the brickkiln : || then will fire consume thee, the sword cut thee off, | will consume thee like hoppers ; | magnify thyself like hoppers, magnify thyself like locusts ! || —More numerous hast thou thy merchants than stars of the heavens : | the hoppers cast the skin and fly away ! || thy mercenaries are like locusts, and thy captains like a line of locusts : | which camp on the walls in the day of cold, yet if the sun riseth they have fled, and the place where they were is not known. || —Thy shepherds slumber O Assyrian king, thy nobles sleep ; | thy people are scattered upon the mountains, no one gathering them : || there is no relief for thy wound, incurable is thy stroke, | they who hear of thee all strike the hand over thee : | for over whom passed not thine evil constantly ? ||

in this connection unexpected, and looks like a mistake.—Thus shalt thou also be now thrown down, overcome, lying insensible like a drunken man upon the ground, Hab. ii. 15, seeking help only from the enemy ; and already the commencement of this condition is visible, inasmuch as at present through the

8. Thus then there remains nothing to look for but what was announced from the first, the necessity of the overthrow, this being once more presented in the final strophe with exultant irony. Do but get ready most zealously for the siege (ii. 2) carefully repair thy walls, especially with bricks just as in Babylon, go therefore into the brickkiln : nevertheless the fire of punishment will as certainly come upon thee as locusts, which are only able to fly in a straight line with the wind, must fall into the fire that is before them ! make thyself therefore as great and proud by means of mere numbers as locusts, it avails thee nothing ! vv. 14, 15.—True, thou hast enormous crowds of merchants, of soldiers and captains : but all these dis-

cowardice of thy people all border-fortresses, the gates and bars of the land (Hos. xi. 6, comp. Tuch *de Nino urbe*, p. 35), fall as easily into the power of the greedy enemy as early figs quickly fall from the shaken figtrees into the mouth of the hungry eater.

appear as suddenly as when *leapers*, i.e. locusts without wings, receive wings at the casting of their skins and so all at once fly away, or as when locusts which in the cold sit stiff upon the walls of houses suddenly at the shining of the sun fly away without leaving a trace behind, vv. 16, 17. Comp. *Ibn-Batuta* in the *Journ. As.* 1843, Mars, p. 240 and the proverb in Casalis *Études sur la langue Sechuana* (Paris, 1841) p. 87.—This kingdom is indeed in a lamentable condition, the undershepherds of the chief shepherd, the king, sleep, the flock is scattered, necessary is thy overthrow and yet lamented by no one in the distance, because all had to suffer so much from thee ! vv. 18, 19.

## 2. SSEPHANYA.

This little book embraces a complete series of prophetic views. It must have owed its origin to a great movement of certain nations which threw all the countries around Yuda into great alarm and threatened to become very dangerous to Jerusalem also. If we ask with what people that great movement originated, it is true the prophet points only in general terms, i. 7; iii. 15, to the instruments of the divine chastisement, but this is only because such brief indications seemed to him with his short book to be all that his contemporaries required. We must, therefore, employ the further aid of other historical data. Now, inasmuch as Ssephanya must be placed in the time of Yosia not only on account of the very accurate heading, i. 1, but also because his entire character shows that he was an older contemporary of Yéremyá, we are compelled to recall that great convulsion of those lands which Herodotus, i. 15, 103-6; iv. 10-12 (comp. *Hist. of Israel*, IV. 226 sq. III. 742 sq.), derives from an inroad of the Scythians. According to his accounts, great hordes of these northern nations marched at that time against Ninevéh and interrupted the siege it was then suffering from the Medes, but the Scythians also advanced by the sea as far as Egypt, and could be induced to depart thence only with difficulty; that they also touched Palestine has been already conjectured in the *Dichter des A. B.*, I. b. p. 196, on Ps. lix. Those last days of the Assyrian empire, when the Medes forced their way from the North-east, gave generally the signal for violent and protracted commotions and movements of all surrounding kingdoms, as a result of which the Chaldeans also were to be overcome, as appears further from Habacquq.

Ssephanya, however, wrote quite at the commencement of this great movement of the nations; a fact which may be



gathered from a further consideration. It is clear that at that time not even a first step had yet been taken in Jerusalem in the direction of the great and thorough reform of religion which king Yosia attempted with so much decision and with such good success in the second half of his reign, 2 Kings xxii., xxiii. We may suppose that after so many earlier prophets had pointed to the necessity of such an inward reform, finally Ssephanya's seriously threatening words urged it upon men's minds: it is certain that his discourses present no trace of an existing endeavour to carry out such a reform. On the contrary, the small kingdom, more and more closely pressed even by the surrounding nations, had become the undisturbed prey of its ancient deeply-seated vices, and appears as entirely forsaken of all higher impulses, as abandoned to false gods, and as immoral, especially as degenerated with respect to its magnates, as we should expect to see it, after the reigns of Manasseh and Amôn, during the minority of Yosia.

Accordingly, when those great movements of the nations began from the far north, it appeared to this prophet long before they approached Jerusalem that a divine light had fallen into this darkness. The true God, who with his watchful eye beholds the vices of all empires and punishes at the right time all that is perverse, appeared to take his way over the whole earth to chastise it, choosing the distant barbarians for his instruments, in order that he might both destroy all ungodliness in the other kingdoms and especially reveal himself as the righteous one in his treatment of Jerusalem, inasmuch as it had deserved punishment still more than they on account of its long obduracy. The serious, unavoidable trial, therefore, overtakes everything, with an overwhelming severity and haste, sweeping over the whole earth as well as Jerusalem. Everyone who has hitherto felt no shame or fear, must now tremble, and everyone who has already sought after Yahvé must still more zealously turn to him! And the Messianic prosperity, which was long ago waited for, cannot come until all ungodliness has

been destroyed on a great day of judgment and punishment upon the earth; but then it will certainly come, and the more rapidly all nations now arise and assemble around the centre of true religion, and the more strongly they desire to destroy it and, as they think, therewith true religion itself, so much the more certainly and generally will the prosperity come! With this threat, exhortation, and promise, the little book is occupied throughout its three parts.

With the prophet Ssephanya we meet for the first time a considerable diminution of prophetic originality; he repeats a good deal almost verbally from older prophets; and, on the other hand, the style is sometimes very ornate and pointed, ii. 1, 2; iii. 11, 18. What is new is especially the extended survey of all lands and nations and the general review of the spiritual affairs and prospects of the whole earth, the destruction of Jerusalem being only incidentally foretold. We see that the small separate nation with its ancient national distinctions must necessarily lose itself more and more in the general life of the nations of the earth, whilst nevertheless the truths which had lived in it remain the same and gain ever greater validity in and through all nations.

i.

- 1 The word of Yahvé which came unto Ssephanya son of Kushi son of Gedalya son of Amarya son of Hizqia in the days of Yosia son of Amôn, the king of Yuda.

### 1.—*The Threat.*

#### Ch. i.

The threat of the approaching judgment upon all things sweeps along stormily in ever widening circles, until it has included everything. At first it breaks out with rapid, comprehensive, and emphatic brevity, vv. 2, 3, then makes a transition especially to Jerusalem, and finds there amongst the various things which the judgment must destroy pre-eminently

the perverse idolatry of every kind, vv. 4-7, recounts further in a calmer third strophe, vv. 8-13, all the other perversities that prevail in Jerusalem as falling under the divine judgment, and describing the nearness and character of the great judgment day with growing animation, returns at the end to its commencement, vv. 14-18. The piece thus presents an example of a discourse that begins at first with difficulty and overpowering agitation, but in its course moves more freely and with increasing volume, as might be expected from the tempest of threatening. Accordingly the strophes successively increase in size from the first to the third, to close with a fourth of the same size as the third.

i.

1.

2 Sweeping I will sweep off everything from the face of the ground! saith Yahvé. || I will carry off man and beast, carry off the fowls of heaven and the fish of the sea, and those stumbling-blocks the wicked! | and I cut off the men from the face of the ground! saith Yahvé.||

2.

And then stretch out my hand over Yuda and over all inhabitants of Jerusalem, || and cut off from this place the remnant of Baal, the name of the parson with the priests; ||  
5 both they who pay worship on the housetops to the host of heaven, | and they who pay worship—who swear to Yahvé and who swear by their king, || and they who turned away from Yahvé's allegiance | and who sought not Yahvé nor inquired after him. || — *Be still before the Lord Yahvé!* for near is Yahvé's day; | yea, Yahvé hath already prepared the sacrifice, hath sanctified his invited. ||

1. First strophe, vv. 2, 3, following Hos. iv. 3. All living things must make way for the grand divine movements by which He will reestablish justice, even if they should all have to perish in order that divine justice, the fundamental condition of prosperity,

may return! But before all other beings, the wicked are thus early mentioned, since they are the general occasion of offence before God and man, and their destruction was long ago necessary.

2. In Jerusalem, vv. 4-6, erroneous religion of every kind, as the foundation of every other wrong thing, shall

especially be visited with punishment, both its institutions, the temples and the various priests, Hos. x, 5, and also

## 3.

And then on the day of Yahvé's sacrifice, I visit the princes and the king's sons | and all who are clothed with strange apparel; || and visit every one who springeth over the threshold on that day, | who thus fill their lord's house with violence and deceit! || And then on that day, saith Yahvé, resoundeth a cry from the fishgate and lamentation from the Newtown | and great alarm from the Hills; || lament inhabitants of the Mortar, | that all Kanaanites have perished, all carrying with  
 10 them money, have been cut off! || And then at that time I will search through Jerusalem with lamps | and visit the men who stiffened upon their lees, who say in their heart, "neither good doeth Yahvé nor evil:" || whose wealth will be for booty and their houses for desolation, | they build houses and will not dwell therein, plant vineyards and will not drink their wine! ||

the multitude of worshippers from the ranks of the people; so that even the *remnant* and the *name* of it disappear, absolutely nothing of it remaining. Although there are speaking generally only two classes of priests to whom reference could here be made, those of the false gods and the unworthy priests of Yahvé himself, iii. 4, there are three classes of worshippers belonging to the nation: (1) such as pay homage to the false gods, *e.g.*, by the Zarathustrian worship of heavenly bodies which was just then introduced into Jerusalem, 2 Kings xxi. 3; xxiii. 5;—(2) such as pay homage—but (the discourse comes to a sudden stop as if it were itself uncertain) it is not known precisely how? still I will describe it: they formally swear allegiance to Yahvé as the national God, but at the same time, when they think it can be done with

impunity, swear by their own particular king (and God, Amos v. 26), with an allusion to the *Milkom* of the Ammônites, 2 Kings xxiii. 13;—(3) the open despisers of Yahvé.—But, ver. 7, O the folly of openly or secretly despising him! Be still before him all the earth! (Hab. ii. 20; Zech. ii. 17) for already the day approaches which, bringing the judgment, must at the same time, inasmuch as the issue of this judgment cannot be doubtful, be a great sacrificial feast at which the wicked fall as sacrifices, and already He has prepared the sacrifice and sanctified those whom he has invited to partake of it (the Scythians), in order that they may be present as his instruments and servants! We find subsequently an echo of this "Isa." xiii. 3; xxxiv. 6.

3. Yes, then, on this sacrificial feast, the prophet proceeds somewhat more calmly, vv. 8-13, the ungodly of every rank and every kind in civil life will also be visited, namely, (1) vv. 8, 9, the luxurious, extravagant magnates as well as the dishonest royal servants

who pretend to render good service to their lord by forcibly exacting treasure for him from his subjects ("who spring over the threshold," *i.e.*, inasmuch as civil affairs are here referred to, who get secretly into the houses, thieves; quite unlike what is said when a super-



## 4.

Nigh is the great day of Yahvé, nigh and very quick! | hark the day of Yahvé—bitterly waileth there the hero; || a day of wrath is that day; | a day of distress and straitness, a day of wreck and ruin; | a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud  
 15 and fog, || a day of trumpets and alarm | upon the fenced cities and upon the high battlements! || Then I make it strait for men and they walk like the blind, because against Yahvé they sinned; | and their blood is poured out like dust and their sap like dung! || also their silver also their gold will be unable to deliver them in the day of Yahvé's wrath, and in the fire of his zeal the whole earth will be devoured; | for death yea death of terror will he execute upon all inhabitants of the earth! ||

stitious reverence for the threshold of a temple is meant, 1 Sam. v. 5);—(2) vv. 10, 11, the little shopkeepers and tradesmen who so often care for nothing but getting money, who are here therefore mockingly called Phœnicians, Hos. xii. 8. just as the quarter where they dwell together in Jerusalem, after the manner of Eastern cities, is also satirically styled the *mortar* (because the sound of the mortar is there especially heard, we might say *the shops comp.* the opposite, Isa. xxii. 5): a different sound will reach them, wailing on account of the approaching enemy, which spreads from the fishgate in the

north, where the enemy enters, and from the new city farther and farther towards the hills of the city in the south; (3) vv. 12, 13, the very rich who like thickened wine, which is not emptied from one vessel into another (Jer. xlviii. 11), have become settled and stiff upon their lees (their riches), indifferent as regards all higher things and only intent upon the protection of their material wealth; who appear fairly innocent looked at from without, but their inmost nature will be revealed before Yahvé and their punishment corresponds to their spiritual obduracy! Amos v. 11.

4. Nigh, indeed, thus finally, vv. 14-18, what had been said at the close of the second strophe, ver. 7, is amplified with increased energy of language, very nigh is the terrible, destructive day (Amos v. 20; Joel ii. 2), at the distant thunder of which even the bravest warrior weeps bitterly (from Amos ii. 14), and from the terrors of which there proceeds at last a trumpet-blast shaking even the best fortified cities at the approach of the enemy who had been previously indicated, ver. 7, (ver. 16 from Amos ii. 2); in consequence the sinners who have been overtaken by such a supernatural terror are as it

were blind, without counsel or help, Nah. iii. 11; Job xii. 25, while their blood is deemed of no value (see the opposite Ps. lxxii. 14), and in vain will the two kinds of people censured, vv. 11, 12, then offer their money as a ransom, Ps. xlix. 8-13; for the general divine judgment that will spare nothing must now really come! The last member of ver. 18 has been formed with slight variations from such passages as Isa. xxviii. 22. לחום, ver. 17, appears like לשר to signify *sap*, and only derivatively bread (then in Arabic flesh), since the root supplies a meaning to stick, adhere to.

2. *The Admonition.*

CH. II. i.-iii. 7.

As the judgment is so certain and so near, the prophet must direct his admonition to all, both to those who had hitherto resisted all amendment and whom the present admonition also would therefore probably move but little, as well as to the others, ii. 1-3. For certainly, if all the kingdoms of the earth are successively reviewed, how greatly do the materials calling for a divine judgment abound, and how certainly will this judgment come upon them all one after the other! It is surely necessary that those who desire to escape should early amend their ways! ii. 4—iii. 7.—Thus going through all the kingdoms, testing and correcting them, the prophet proceeds from the nearest small kingdoms which had once been under the Davîdic rule, and the return of which to this rule in the Messianic age is first looked for, and mentions in the West the kingdom of the Philistines, vv. 4-7, in the East those of Môab and ‘Ammôn, vv. 8-10; but he then extends his gaze to the more distant large kingdoms and nations of the North and South, dwelling especially upon the case of Ninevéh, which served at that time before all other countries as an example of divine punishment, vv. 11-15; until he finally returns to Jerusalem from which he had started, iii. 1-7. In the middle, therefore, three equal strophes against the heathen.

ii.

1 Turn pale, and be pale, | O people who never turned white, ||  
 before the term is born, like chaff cometh on the day, | ere the  
 heat of Yahvé's anger come upon you, ere the day of Yahvé's  
 anger come upon you! || — Seek ye Yahvé all ye humble of  
 the earth, who executed his judgment! | seek ye justice seek  
 ye humility, if perhaps ye may hide yourselves on the day of  
 Yahvé's anger! ||

The sentence ii. 1, 2, forms an anti-thesis to ver. 3. In the first place, after such threats, the obdurate, they who hitherto never blushed at their own

shame (iii. 5), or, at once to put more strongly what is in this case fitting, they who hitherto became pale at no threat, are summoned now at least to

## 1.

For *Ghazza* will be *forgotten*, and 'Ashqalon a desolation ; | Ashdôd—at noon one driveth her out, and 'Eqrôn will be *hacked up*. || O ye inhabitants of the *district* of the sea, nation of the *Krêts*—Yahvé's word concerneth you ! | Kanáan land of the Philistines—thee I destroy without any inhabitants ! || for the sea's border will be pasturage of *herdsmen's*-huts, of flocks of sheep, || it is for *districts* to the remnant of Yuda,—upon them will they feed in the morning, in Ashqalon's houses lie down at evening | —when Yahvé their God will visit them, and their fortunes will turn.

become pale with terror, and undergo an inward change, before the *term* (חֶקֶל, like Mic. vii. 11), which according to the foregoing oracle is still granted to the present generation, *is born* (the construction of לָדָת as in the instance § 304 b), breaks forth from the dark womb of the future, ver. 2 a, namely, as ver. 2 c adds, that term when wrath breaks forth in fire : or, as the following member b says, before the *day* threatened in ch. i. comes over the border flying as chaff before the wind, namely, as ver. 2 d explains, the day of wrath. In this way the words ver. 2 a and b, at first too brief, are fully explained by the following two members c and d ; at the same time the construc-

tion is varied, for the sake of diversity, חֶקֶל being at first used with the *inf.* (with reference to the following *perf.*, see § 346 c), מָרָם then following with the *imperf.* with no other effect than greater clearness. The word חֶקֶל might, according to very early usage, Ps. ii. 7, mean *decree* or *oracle* : but that sense would not suit the context and the arrangement of the members. קָשָׁה, like the Syriac *Kash* and Arabic *Kashsha*, signifies what is grey, pale, from which elsewhere יָשֵׁן *old*, and קָשׁ stubble, so called from its growing old.—But, ver. 3, they also who in the past sought after Him, must in view of this great trial still more zealously seek Him !

1. Vv. 4-7. For the small states, dwelling nearest to us, in the west, will soon be overtaken by the long deserved lot, Amos i. 6 ; Zech. ix. 5, 6 : namely, to be laid desolate, then to be again subject, after the destruction of heathenism, to the reformed Israel, as in the Davidic age ; for it is certain that this subjection cannot take place before the inward reformation and (Messianic) regeneration of Israel, as is added, ver. 7, in the last members of the verse. Numerous paronomasiæ occur in these verses (precisely to describe the *corresponding* punishments), between עֲזָבָה and עֲקָרָה, properly *laid waste*, עֲקָרָה

חָבֶל and חֶבֶל properly *rooted up*, חָבֶל cord, *district* of the sea, and חֶבֶל cord, *i.e.* line, measuring line, whence possession, the former therefore being used as a *fem.*, ver. 6, and the latter as *masc.*, ver. 7, and between כְּרָתִים an ancient name of the Philistines (comp. *History of Israel* I. 243 (I. 352 sq.)) and בָּרֵת and בָּרֵת, derived from יָכַר, Arabic *wakara*, changing into Arabic *wakana*, and this into קָוָן may mean *nests*, therefore little houses, huts or cars of shepherds, forming thus the beautiful antithesis, that where now splendid houses are, comp. ver. 7, there will then be merely pasture lands with shepherd's

## 2.

I have heard the scorn of Môab and the revilings of the sons of 'Ammôn, | how they scorned my people and acted proudly against its border. || Therefore as I live, saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God : | surely Môab will become as Sodom and 'Ammôn as Gamorrha, possession of nettles and pits for salt and desolation for ever ; | the residue of my people will spoil them, the reformed of my community be their heirs ! ||  
 10 this to them for their pride, that they scorned and acted proudly against the people of Yahvé of Hosts ! ||

## 3.

Very terrible is Yahvé unto them, in that he shattered all the gods of the earth, | in order that all the isles of the Heathen—every one from his place—may do him homage ! || —Ye Kushites also—are the slain of my sword ! ||—And already he stretched his hand toward the North and smote Assyria, | in order to make Ninevéh a desolation, a dryness like the desert ; || then flocks lie down in her midst, all beasts in crowds ; also pelicans also hedghogs will pass the night upon her capitals, | the owl will sing in the window, the crow upon the threshold “crushed desolated.”\*

hut-cars and sheep-folds. After עליהם which must refer to גוֹת, a word like בקר must be wanting, according to all

2. Vv. 8-10. Inasmuch as the small kingdoms of the East were somewhat more powerful than those of the West, and often made inroads, as from pure mockery and love of mischief, into Israel (the border acc. Amos i. 13), the prophet chooses an introductory phrase for Môab and 'Ammôn which had for-

appearance ; the LXX have an addition to this verse, but not a suitable one.

merly been used of Môab, Isa. xvi. 6 ; however, in this case with the meaning : *heard*, therefore not unheard or passed by, but heard in order to punish it. The comparison with Edom was geographically considered very relevant precisely at this point.

3. Vv. 11-15. With regard to the numerous northern nations, it is said very abruptly, ver. 11, Yahvé who has brought out in the present commotions of the nations the helplessness of all

heathen gods, has already become to them exceedingly terrible, in order that they may soon learn to pay homage to him alone !—And with equal brevity it is said, ver. 12, with an allusion to the

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\* The author's assonance, in imitation of the Hebrew and the croak of the ill-omened bird, *zerhackt zerknackt*, can hardly be reproduced in our weaker language.  
 —Tr.



15

*"This joyous city which dwelt securely,  
Which said in her heart, "I and none besides!"  
O how is she become a desolation, a lair of beasts!"*

every one passing by her will hiss, waving his hand. ||

iii.

1

O rebelling and polluted, | oppressing city, || that listened to no voice, received no correction, | in Yahvé trusted not and unto her God drew not nigh, || whose princes within her are roaring lions, whose judges evening wolves that saved not for the morning, || whose prophets are praters, men of dishonesty, | whose priests desecrated what is holy, violated the law: || Yahvé is just within her, doeth no injustice, | every morning bringeth his justice to light, never failing: but an unjust man knoweth no shame! || I cut off nations, their battlements are laid waste, their streets desolated without any wayfarer, | their cities devastated without any people without an inhabitant; || I think "thou wilt nevertheless fear me wilt receive correction," | that her holy place be not cut off, entirely as I appointed concerning her: | but only the more zealously did they corrupt all their deeds! ||

event which befel the southernmost nations, which is further mentioned, Nah. iii. 8-12, they also must now feel their weakness before the punishing sword of Yahvé! comp. iii. 10. The same, further, Isa. xxxiv. 3-7.—But the discourse hastens, vv. 13-15, to Ninevéh, which had then already suffered its first siege and was threatened with the second; since the sense also does not favour the forms וַיִּבֶד and וַיִּבֶד, it is probably better to read וַיִּבֶד and וַיִּבֶד, so that the description of the future and of the purpose commences only with the following וַיִּבֶד, just as with וַיִּבֶד, ver. 11. The description, ver. 14, of the manner in which all animals, wild ones also, dwell in multitudes (גִּי is both here and ver. 9 used with the rare

meaning of עַם) in the ruins, and the owls mutter with their croaking ill-omened voices, as it were the hoarse words אֶרְוָה עֶרְוָה (as must be read instead of אֶרְוָה, perf. Hiph. acc. § 122 a): "he, or one, hath crushed (comp. ver. 11), destroyed, literally laid bare," is manifestly more original and forcible here than "Isa." xiii. 21, 22; xxxiv. 13-17. The word קוֹל cannot, acc. § 286 f, signify voice in this place, but must correspond pretty much to γλαυξ and our owl, perhaps also to the Ethiopic kwā; and חֶרֶב appears = עֶרְב. But every wayfarer also will sing over her a lamentation, accompanied by hissing and mockery, ver. 15; comp. Isa. xxiii. 7; xlvii. 10.

iii. 1-7. Thus, finally coming back again to Jerusalem, which appears to be closed generally against all admonition, the language becomes more strictly

that of reprimand, and amplifies further, in the sense of the sentence, ii. 1, 2, the severe twofold sin that rests upon her. This city of countless perversities,

which, as it now is, has not even the heart to approach sincerely and trustfully her God, vv. 1-4, sees constantly it is true within herself the living activity of the divine righteousness, as it comes afresh to light with every new day, namely, as it makes itself ceaselessly felt through the prophets and reveals itself without ever being found to fail, and might thereby alone be drawn powerfully enough to take her own part in it, if the ancient truth did not here apply, that whoever is once given to injustice knows no further any shame, ver. 5; but, in addition to this, she also sees beyond her own territory in the movements of the nations the most tremendous examples of destruction and divine chastisement, by which surely (not entirely to miss the meaning they

convey) she ought to feel urged herself to repentance, in order that her sacred asylum, the temple (מִעֹן) may not be destroyed, in accordance with all the earlier oracles that were delivered regarding the safe refuge of the temple in Ssion, e. g. Isa. xxix. 1-9; but only so much the more zealously (הַשָּׂכִים) have they corrupted their deeds, acted with intentional corruption! In the sentence כֹּל אֲשֶׁר פָּקַדְתִּי עָלֶיהָ the discourse refers for the sake of brevity to the many older oracles that lauded the temple as a secure asylum; אֲשֶׁר = as inasmuch as the entire construction כֹּל אֲשֶׁר is put briefly in the accusative of *measure*, see § 333 a. The *perff.* ver. 6, refer to the actual state at that time of the distant lands of Asia and Africa.

### 3. The Promise.

CH. III. 8-20.

If the admonition in the case of the multitude generally thus fails of its end, what remains for the faithful few who are indicated ii. 3?—At present nothing but hope and endurance until the great day of victory, the turn of all human things for the better! In the certainty that the truth of Yahvé within and beyond the ancient community will one day completely triumph, let Ssion rejoice and courageously meet all the troubles that await her!—The four symmetrical strophes which are naturally called for by this subject-matter are as follows:—

#### 1.

Therefore wait for me, saith Yahvé, for the day when I arise to the attack! | for my prerogative is to collect the nations—that I may assemble the kingdoms to pour upon them my punishment—all the heat of mine anger; | yea in the fire of my jealousy will the whole earth be devoured! || For then will I turn unto the nations a pure tongue, | that all may call on

10 Yahvé's name, may serve him with one shoulder; || from along-

side the streams of Kush will men convey my perfumes, | the daughter Put my gifts.

## 2.

On that day thou wilt not be ashamed for all thy deeds which thou hast transgressed against me, | for then will I remove from thy midst thy proudly exulting ones, and thou shalt no more be insolent upon my holy mount; || and I leave behind in thy midst a humble and meek nation, | who trust in Yahvé's name! || The saved ones of Israel will not do injustice nor speak lies, | nor will there be found in their mouth a tongue of deceit, | but they feed and lie down, no one making them afraid! ||

## 3.

Shout daughter of Ssion, exult Israel! | rejoice and be glad  
15 with the whole heart daughter of Jerusalem! || Yahvé hath removed thy punishments, turned out thine enemy; | as Israel's

1. Vv. 8-10. Wait in calm hope for the great day of Yahvé, which is not merely the general day of judgment and punishment, as is further explained ch. i, comp. especially i. 18 with iii. 8, but which brings with it also by the great victory over all resistance, the true commencement of Messianic prosperity; as if it were included in the plan, or looking still deeper, in the *right* (מִשְׁפָּט) of the divine righteousness to unite all opposing elements as for a great battle, in order that He arising as combatant may then obtain a more general victory, and the time may arrive when a pure language, accompanied with pure feeling and pure thoughts, again prevails amongst all nations, the language of the purely spiritual service of Yahvé, and when

the most distant nations of the South, ver. 10, as of the North, ver. 8, flock with homage to the true God. עַד, ver. 8, properly an advance, attack, battle, then as a consequence booty, Gen. xlix. 27, which however is not the meaning here. With *one shoulder*, ver. 9, one yoke (Isa. ix. 3; x. 27), service. According to the very clear structure of the members of ver. 10, there correspond עָתֵרוֹ and מִנְחָתִי, Ez. viii. 11, מַעֲבָר from Isa. ch. xviii., and בַּת פֹּזִי, where therefore פֹּזִי must have arisen by an ancient copyist's error from פֹּז, Nah. iii. 9, like daughter of Tarshish, Isa. xxiii. 10. The accents follow the false reading and explanation. It may also be better to read מִנְחָתִי.

2. Vv. 11, 12. And as among heathen nations, so especially in the totally transformed Jerusalem will this high prosperity be evident, so that if now it must blush before Yahvé on account of its unfaithfulness and haughtiness, as was said, ver. 5, then it

will no more be cast down and helpless through the memory thereof. The words עָלֵיו גָּאוֹה with quite another and more definite reference here than in Isa. xiii. 3. In other respects Isa. xi. 9 is in the prophet's mind.

king is Yahvé in thy midst, thou seest no more any evil! ||—  
On that day will Jerusalem be called; *Fear not*, | Ssion *Have not slack hands!* || Yahvé thy God in thy midst will help as a hero, | will rejoice over thee with joy, grow young again in his love, exult over thee with shouting. ||

## 4.

Sorrowful for the feast which I broke off are certain of thee, | thou land over which reproach is raised: || but behold I do thus with all thy tormentors at that time | that I help the lame and gather the scattered, and make them a praise and  
20 fame whose shame is in all the earth! || At that time will I settle you, and in that time it is that I gather you; | yea I make you a fame and praise among all nations of the earth, when I turn your fortunes before your eyes! saith Yahvé.

3. Vv. 14-17. Therefore rejoice rather (after "Zech." ix. 9)† if judgments, conquest by enemies, and sufferings of that kind impend, then they are all cancelled in that happy time at which the glance of the prophet above tarries;—so that then instead of the old names which are inadequate for the new and more exalted condition, Jerusalem and Ssion will receive new names, with the sense of "Fear not!"

4. Vv. 18-20. It is true, to gather up finally all that has been said, many of thy children have been in deep trouble in that time to which the imagination here rises, on account of the feasts which have been broken off by the exile. O thou city, object of general scorn in the exile, a scorn which now begins (on מִשְׁאָת see § 160 e) amidst the movements of the nations: but what avail all heathen who torment thee against the resolve of Yahvé? on the contrary, on that day of the great turn of fortunes just named, Yahvé will gather his flock now scattered in the exile (from Mic. iv. 6) and make them who had previously served only to provoke contempt through the whole earth, so much the greater and more

and "Be courageous!" just as in the case of renewed love the husband rejoices over his reconciled wife, so will He, the redeemer, rejoice over his! Instead of יִחְרִישׁ, the meaning of which is here quite foreign, the LXX still preserved the reading יִחְדִּישׁ, the Hiph. of which must then be taken as an inchoative, § 122 c. All this is re-echoed in very various ways, "Isa." xl.-lxvi.

glorious, ver. 19. In that time, not earlier it is true, but certainly in that time, when such divine miracles are wrought before the eyes of Israel, as e.g., especially the deliverance of Israel in all the various countries whither it is scattered, this prosperity will come, as is expressly said two or three times again, ver. 20. הָבִיא to cause any one to have an entrance, a house of his own. The words בָּכַל הָאָרֶץ בְּשֵׁתָם, ver. 19, form only the explanatory relative sentence to the foregoing עָם in וְשִׁמְתִּים, acc. § 332 a, just as Ps. xlix. 12; it is not necessary therefore to take the words acc. § 290 d, as meaning in the whole land of their shame.



## 3. HABAQQŪQ.

1. At the time of the prophecy of Habaqqûq, the prophecy of Ssephanya concerning an attack upon Jerusalem by barbarous northern nations has been completely fulfilled: the Chaldeans are in the holy land cruelly trampling down everything with irresistible force and allowing their own injustice alone to pass as justice. It is without doubt remarkable how suddenly the Chaldeans appear as a conquering nation. Herodotus knows nothing of Chaldeans, who become great conquerors about this time: he mentions only the Scythians. It is again remarkable that the era of Nabopolassar, *i.e.*, the commencement of the great Chaldean rule in Babylon is placed precisely in this time, when according to Herodotus the Scythians were very powerful in Western Asia, 625 B.C. This seems to point to a close connection: Scythians as well as Chaldeans are names of northern people who made their way southwards in search of spoil, and perhaps the remnants of the Scythians were absorbed into the new Babylonian rule, inasmuch as the Babylonians increased their own strength by the reception and training of these warlike children of nature, and these theirs by the arts and sciences of the Babylonians (comp. *πλὴν τῆς βαβυλωνίης μοίρης*, Herod. i. 106). If we attend to Habaqqûq's graphic description, we find that the appearance of the Chaldeans as great conquerors was at that time an entirely new phenomenon in Yuda, i. 5, 6, since the Scythians, if they showed themselves there earlier, had certainly only hazarded transient inroads into the hill country. The Chaldeans, on the other hand, according to Habaqqûq, preserved the most wonderful natural vigour unweakened, just as might be expected from Scythians and other aggressive sons of nature, i. 6-11, and possessed also arts and sciences which are not found amongst such nations and which were partly of very

ancient origin in Babylon, as the art of conducting a siege, in which they manifestly surpassed the Hebrews, i. 10, elaborate architecture and great love of grand buildings, ii. 9-15, Herod. i. 184, 185. Thus the description of *Habaqqûq* seems to confirm the above supposition.

2. In the time between *Ssephanya* and *Habaqqûq* that great change, which all earlier prophets and finally *Ssephanya* had so eagerly desired, had also taken place, the reform of the internal condition of the state, the purification of the ancient religion and the interdiction of heathenism, 2 Kings xxii., xxiii. And how great a change that really was may be gathered from the entire tone of *Habaqqûq*'s prophecy, a prophecy which though it deals with the most varied subjects still never speaks of the continuance of the ancient transgressions of the kingdom, but rather presupposes the actual accomplishment of reform, an endeavour after a purer state of things in the kingdom. The impression which the whole book produces is that at that time there existed in the kingdom of Yuda no such ground for complaint and its consequent threat of Divine anger as had abundantly existed in the previous centuries; justice and law appeared once more to flourish in the life of the kingdom, in the endeavours of the nation, and there appeared to be no more any trace of idolatry, i. 2-4, 12-17, the inner life of the people appeared to be wickedly interrupted by the Chaldean just as it was about to put forth noble fruit, i. 4. One might be tempted by the rare picture of such internal purification and revival to suppose that *Habaqqûq* wrote during the life of the pious king *Yosia*: but since the first inroad of the Chaldeans of which we have certain knowledge, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, was not before the reign of the king *Yoyaqim*, we are obliged to accept this latter period, but may on no account descend below it, inasmuch as nothing is more evident from the book than that the conquest of the Chaldeans was at the time quite a recent phenomenon. Though at that time various perversities prevailed in the internal affairs of Yuda

itself, as we know was the case from other sources, they appeared for the moment in the mind of our prophet to be quite thrown into the background in comparison with the wholly new phenomenon and terrible rule of the Chaldeans.

3. The conjunction of these two facts, which were so absolutely contradictory according to the feelings of the ancient Hebrews, on the one hand, innocence within the kingdom, and, on the other, oppression without, was therefore the great enigma of the age, which pressed upon no one more heavily than upon our prophet. For the solution prepared by previous prophets here fell short: that the present suffering was intended to serve only as a chastisement of prevailing perversities, inasmuch as the people and the state were not untrue on the whole to the new reform, could not in this case supply a sufficient motive for the Divine action, enabling the prophetic anticipation to make it a starting point; a wholly new truth must be revealed to meet this case, or at least a truth which might have been spoken at some earlier date must be presented with a significance and power that had hitherto been unknown.—In addition to this was the fact that the existing suffering was not of the kind that enabled a prophet to prophesy its speedy end: for the Chaldean rule, with all the severity with which it weighed upon Yuda, was at that time in its commencement and progress, not having reached its height even. True, it is a sign of genuine prophetic clearness and power, that the prophet already prophesies to this but newly rising star its hour and goal, and anticipates with certainty its final fall, i. 11; ii. 5-19; but with regard to the present no salvation appears to his clear vision, and with regard to the future his prophetic eye peering into the distance can discern nothing but a possible increase of these calamities, as really the result proved to be the case.

There therefore remained precisely for the keenest prophetic glance and its most agonizing inquiry no other consoling prospect than faithfulness in the midst of the continued trial

which was still before it, or the great utterance, "The just will live by his faithfulness," ii. 4. Every thing gave way and all human stays failed, Jerusalem had been taken and there was no prospect of its deliverance: yet precisely at the moment when all human consolation proved valueless, the spiritual energy of faithfulness must approve itself all the more powerfully and purely as the one means of future salvation. And that period was the first in which absolutely simple and pure hope thus revealed itself in its necessity in the midst of Jerusalem, and was described by a prophet in brief, grand outline as the divine key to the future.

But it may easily be believed that Habaqqûq in the midst of the confusions of that strange time was not at once overtaken by the clear picture of this pure hope: at first he might well join in the nation's lamentation and wrestle for a solution of the great and new enigma of the time. And even then, when he had descried the truth as from heaven and desired to proclaim it to the world, he might know how much trouble it would give the majority of his contemporaries to hold it fast by faith, inasmuch as precisely for the present it supplied no hopes but only confirmed the fear of still heavier calamities, whilst at the same time it seemed to him of highest importance that the entire community should obtain the true faith by entering into the prophetic thought, in order that with regard to the future they might neither give way to hopeless complaint nor indulge in false expectations. Accordingly the prophet makes use of an uncommon form of literary art in the presentation of his subject, for the purpose of more powerfully influencing those feelings which prevailed in the minds of the people at the time, and of reducing all that was dark and troubled in their conceptions into a new divine transparency. He had no wish, or perhaps was unable, to labour by word of mouth after the manner of the older prophets: with all the greater energy, therefore, he availed himself of the pen, and the prophetic literature had at that time been very highly deve-



loped, had been already enriched by the use of other forms of poetic art, and was still endeavouring to attain its ends by hitherto untried methods. It appears now again in a more artistic form than in the prophet dealt with Vol. II., 322 sq.; in fact, it here attempts the utmost that it could well perform in respect of originality of form and illustration. It is in this case as in the former a simple scenic and declamatory piece (a drama), divided into three parts, which the prophet constructs around that new fundamental thought, by which light is to be thrown upon the darkness and peace into the contending thoughts of the time.

What intense effort does it need to rise from the confusion and despair of the present even to the pure divine fundamental thought which may preserve the godly man therefrom, and again to rise to the true anticipations regarding the further development of the future which are connected with that thought! When all despair some one must be the first to rise to that height: but when one man has thus risen and there yet remains for the immediate future no great speedy deliverance but rather only an increase of the heavy calamities, how needful for him further is then the retrospect of all the brighter past of the community of the true religion, how needful a new realization of all its eternal hopes, yea, of a fresh devotion of the inmost soul to this religion, in order to find the desired assurance and repose! The prophet shares all three situations, and is able himself most profoundly to understand them: he is at first only an individual member of the nation, suffering and complaining in and with it, even as a prophet, who must take a wider survey in the midst of the confused movements of the nations and the agitations of the time, he is thrilled by all the human emotions of just yearning and lamentation. But as a prophet he must not let this satisfy him, there is no one else whom the power of complaint must impel so much as him to seek the needed light by raising his soul to God; and if even this light should fail to give him human

consolation, he is still a member of the great community, and may find assurance in the thought of its continuance and the eternal faith and hope which had long ago been revealed. The voices which must be heard in those three successive situations of his spiritual life, the prophet brings before us with great vividness and truth: and if the whole work as he here produces it might be really performed as a drama, which perhaps was prevented only on account of the Chaldean possession of Jerusalem at the time, at all events the third of these pieces, ch. iii., is so arranged that it could be performed in the Temple itself in some such way as Pss. xx., xxi., lxxxv. If Habaqqûq was himself a priest, as is probable, there is the greater probability that the piece, ch. iii., was actually performed in public.\*

Great as Habaqqûq is in thought, he is no less so in language and literary skill; he is the last prophet belonging to the age preceding the destruction of Jerusalem who is master of a beautiful style, of powerful description, and an artistic power that enlivens and orders everything with charming effect. We are still able to admire in him the genuine type and full beauty of ancient Hebrew prophecy; he is its last pure light, and although he already reproduces much from older books, he still maintains complete independence.

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i.

1. The High-Oracle which Habaqqûq the Prophet announced.

1. *The Agonising Complaint; the Prophet on his own account.* CH. I.

The complaint, the human sorrow and the enquiry that borders on despair, how long the Righteous One can behold such

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\* Compare the remarks that have been often repeated from the first edition, *History of Israel*, IV. 260 (III. 787 sq.); *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* XI. p. 30; especially *Dichter des Alten Bundes* I. a p. 83 sq. 2nd ed.

injustice? are here predominant. It is true, precisely because the man who complains is also a prophet, a higher endeavour, a freer survey soon irresistibly breaks through the mournful language; as if it were wrong merely to complain, the prophet feels impelled as by a higher influence for a moment to take a freer glance into the wide history of the nations, and just then the higher voice proclaims to him, that this new, extraordinary phenomenon must have its cause in Yahvé, that therefore no other than Yahvé has raised up the Chaldean, endowed him with his marvellous strength, and has therefore also, as is already indicated at least distantly, put a limit to his totally degenerate, brutal force, vv. 5-11. But the complaint is still too overwhelming for this first upward effort of a higher line of thought thus early entirely to restrain; therefore together with the acknowledgment of the divine power that controls the Chaldean and precisely with a glance at eternal righteousness, the complaint concerning the ceaseless injustice of the Chaldean, which appears to be undisturbed, returns again, vv. 12-17, so that the whole piece, notwithstanding the two interchanging voices, does not lose the appearance of censure or arraignment of divine justice (תִּנְכַּחֲתָהּ, ii. 1).—The strophe has here properly six verses: but the first is only the half of a strophe, and to the second a brief word of transition and rapid conclusion is appended, ver. 11.

## 1.

- 2 How long Yahvé do I call and thou hearest not, | complain unto thee of wrong and thou dost not help? || wherefore causest thou me to see evil and behold sin, is violence and wrong before me, | and contention cometh and strife ariseth? || Therefore law is benumbed, and justice cometh not forth according to truth: | because the wicked surroundeth the just, therefore perverted judgment cometh forth. ||

1. Vv. 2-4. רַבִּיט, ver. 3, must according to the context be a new Hiph. from the Hiph., which is also grammatically possible, acc. § 122 *d.*—The result of an unrighteous power arising in a

kingdom is always this, that endless conflict arises among the citizens who had till then lived in peace, inasmuch as many are base enough to flatter the new power and pursue their own objects,

## 2.

- 5 Look ye among the nations and behold, amaze yourselves be  
 ye amazed! | for a deed doeth he in your days which ye  
 believe not when narrated. || —“For behold I raise up the  
 Chaldeans, the rough and the restless nation, | which goeth  
 through the breadth of the earth, to possess dwellings which  
 are not his; || frightful and terrible is it, | from himself his  
 justice and his majesty goeth forth; || and swifter than leopards  
 are his horses, and fiercer than evening wolves his chargers  
 leap, | and his horsemen go far away, fly as an eagle hasteth to  
 gorging; || each cometh to do wrong, the endeavour of their  
 faces is towards assault, | so that he collecteth prisoners like  
 10 the dust; || and at kings he mocketh, and princes are to him  
 a laughing-stock, | and he laugheth at every stronghold, and  
 throweth up dust and taketh it.” || —But he exceeded in daring  
 and transgressed and—becometh guilty: | this his strength be-  
 cometh his God! ||

and that law is looked upon coldly, unconcernedly, and no true sentence, such as justice demands, is delivered. Unfortunately we have no information with regard to the particular facts here al-

2. Vv. 5-11. Ver. 5, after Yôél i. 2, 3, however it is not Yahvé speaking immediately in ver. 5, but the prophet first calls attention to him who begins to speak ver. 6: the entire Oracle, vv. 6-10, sounds exactly like the matter of an older Oracle here only re-echoed. Why dost thou complain and lament in this way? only look around you in the great history of the nations: whatever unheard of thing may now take place, there nevertheless happens only what necessarily followed from the divine will and oracle. The unbroken physical energy of a nation that has not been weakened by luxury is, it is true, something marvellous and divine; and if it becomes the conqueror of vast countries belonging to nations that are more or less reduced to effeminacy, there is in this fact an indication of a divine control of history which ought not to be

luded to. נצח is clearly the antithesis to מִעֵקֶל; *surrounded* as a lion with its claws, after a figure used in a lyric also belonging to the seventh century, Ps. x. 8-10.

overlooked. Equally unique with the phenomenon itself is here its description from the mouth of Him who not accidentally produced it; there is observable in it, as in the most animated picture, the overwhelming, resistless, marvellous energy of this new nation. Two characteristics of it especially are wonderful: (1) of a more physical nature, the tremendous rapidity with which it passes through the most distant and immense countries upon its horses, just as we should expect from the Scythians. (2) Of a more moral nature, the fierce, resistless, defiant reliance upon its own strength and majesty, receiving from no other nation justice or honour, but confirming all that it does, however hard and proud it may be, with the seal of its own justice and its own majesty, conquering, plundering countries, making numberless cap-



3.

Art thou not from everlasting Yahvé my God? my Holy One thou wilt not die! | Yahvé! for judgment hast thou made him, and Rock! for punishment appointed him! || Thou of too pure eyes to behold iniquity, and to look at evil art not able: | wherefore lookest thou upon the treacherous, holdest thy peace when the unjust devoureth the just, || and makest men as fish of the sea, | as the worm that hath no ruler? || Every one he taketh with the hook, draweth him into his net and gathereth him into his dredge; | therefore is he merry and glad! || therefore sacrificeth he to his net and burneth incense to his dredge, | because by them is fat his portion, and his food rich. || What? shall he therefore empty his net, | and continually to slay nations feel no scruple? ||

tives, storming fortresses, despising kings and nations. This twofold peculiarity of the nation is described first more briefly vv. 6, 7, then more at length and in detail vv. 8-10. It is clear, ver. 8, that the first פֶּרְשִׁי must answer in meaning to סוֹסִי, therefore חָדָו and וּפְשָׁו (Mal. iii. 20) must be taken together in meaning, Zeph. iii. 3; Job ix. 26. קָדִימָה bears the poetic meaning of "towards storm," i.e., towards mischief, barbarity, and conquest, as plainly appears from the context, and as in Hos. xii. 2. כָּלָה, ver. 9 as ver. 15, only that here it signifies every Chaldean.—But the God who gives him this marvellous strength also knows his limits and foresees that as no rude force of nature is likely to restrain itself within due bounds, his success will prove dangerous to himself; which is briefly said as a significant closing vaticination, a hint which ought not to be overlooked, though this is not the place to pursue it (comp. ch. ii.);

and the whole force of the utterance lies in the emphatic final words: *this his strength becometh his God*, his strength which he owed to another he begins to idolize, proudly confounding effect and cause, and falling away from the true God in his prosperity (comp. ver. 16; Job xii. 6): it is exactly this that constitutes the real guilt, the evil germ which must necessarily go on to consume inwardly his prosperity. Because this has partly begun and is still more in prospect, the description changes from the past חָלַף and וַיַּעֲבֵר into the future חָלֵף and וַיַּעֲבֵר, to press after, to swell, exceed, nearly the same as עָבַר. Jer. v. 28; רוּחַ is its accusative, § 281 b. It is a known usage of the Scythians, Bulgarians, and similar northern nations, that they in particular really worshipped their swords, spears, etc., Herod. iv. 62, comp. Otfried Müller's *Orchomenos*, p. 196; Theodor Waitz's *Die Indianer Nordamerika's* (Leipzig, 1865), p. 127.

3. Vv. 12-17. The commencement, ver. 12, contains a believing, ready acceptance of the hint just given, ver. 11: yes, thou Immortal One remainest to

me, remainest my God; without doubt thou hast not placed the Chaldean above thyself and above thy judgment, but hast raised him up to judge him. But how

is this consistent with thy perfect righteousness, that thou sufferest him still to go on unpunished in his work of destroying men like animals having no rights or owners? vv. 13, 14. How revolting it is to see how he still loudly rejoices to be able to take men captive like uncared-for fish (ver. 9 c), yea, idolizes his sword, the instrument of his successful lawlessness and force! vv. 15, 16. Shall he because he so completely despises all divine things and rights be successful to the end, empty his net, in which he keeps men captive, for the purpose of slaying his captives

like fish? Ps. x. 9, 10. Ver. 12, *למשפט* and *להוכיח*, according to the sense of the passage, refer as plainly to the Chaldean himself, as *המות* must be read instead of *נפֹת*, contrary to the Massōra and LXX; in *ד צור* answers to *המות* *לא*. The phrase which might appear objectionable to a good many ancient readers, really expresses only our idea of *immortality*; but *we shall not die* or *נמות ולא*, LXX, *that we die not*, is a thought which is quite foreign to the passage.

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## 2. *The Divine Answer: the Prophet with God*, CH. II.

Out of such despair the prophet must by force arouse himself, climb to the prophetic watch-tower, in order that he may look simply to heaven and thence receive the pure Divine voice in the midst of these dark problems (Ps. lxxxv. 9; Isa. xxi. 6-9). This was the feeling of the prophet; and not in vain was his waiting for light from heaven: he heard a great word from Yahvé, a brief but significant and weighty oracle concerning the future, which he is commanded to place when plainly written in a public place for a witness in the future and for the instruction of all, since its import and design will not be immediately fulfilled (Isa. viii. 1, 16; xxx. 8). If we consider more particularly the meaning of this short oracle, ver. 4, we find that it expresses strongly the actual insolence and dishonesty of the Chaldean, and therefore does not at once reject the previous complaint, permitting the conclusion and hope that the Chaldean will possibly be punished in the future, but, at the same time, it promises this punishment as one that will not come soon, on the contrary, it points the righteous man to faithfulness as the means by which he will *live*, not *perish*.

With this introduction, which expresses all the highest truths in brief decisive terms, a new wide field is opened for prophetic consideration: and the prophet is at the moment too absorbed on his divine elevation to suffer his spirit immediately to stoop to the purely human feelings with which he had originally commenced. Accordingly his spirit lingers at first over the consideration of the first half of this solemn dual oracle, over the divine explanation of the insolence of the Chaldean, who though he is not named is plainly intended: he proceeds to consider the punishment which is the eternal consequence of all insolence and pride, ver. 5; and soon it seems to him, as he still stands upon his divine elevation, as if he heard coming up to him from the distance the voice of all the nations that had been subjugated by the Chaldeans, how they in rivalry with each other sing the most solemn didactic and satirical song concerning the necessary overthrow of the Unjust man in the hearing of him who must by his manifold injustice prepare his own grave, vv. 6-19. That forms a long competitive song which grows in length: O how many nations can, and one day will, without hindrance, raise those voices which the prophet now hears by anticipation, and how certain is the overthrow of the Chaldean in the distant future! But while this distant song in five strophes tends to grow indefinitely, the whole is suddenly contracted into one highest moment: He intends to appear for whose full presence everything is waiting, around whose glory the prophet with the entire community must assemble, and this second stage of the prophet's whole endeavour and labour is resolved into the still higher one, ver. 20.

ii.

1. "Upon my watch will I step, set myself upon the citadel, | and look out to see what he may speak with me, and what I may reply to my censure!" || And Yahvé answered me and said: write the vision and engrave it upon the tablets, | that men may read it easily; || for yet is the vision for the time, nevertheless it shall hasten to an end and not lie; | though it

tarry wait for it, for it doth come, stayeth not away. || *Behold puffed up, dishonest is his inmost soul: | but the just by his*  
 5 *faithfulness will live!* || —And in fact

*Yea wine is a deceiver:*

*the hero that is inflated, he findeth no home.*

Who set wide as hell his greed, and is as death insatiable, and thus gathered unto him all the nations, and drew unto him all the peoples: || will not all these take up concerning him a proverb, and serious taunt as a riddle concerning him, | and say:

Ver. 1. He will look out regarding two things: (1) what God may speak with him, the oracle itself; but this pure divine word must necessarily be consolatory at the same time (2) in its application, something that God says in reply to the censure or complaint against himself uttered in Ch. i. It is probably better to read מַצֹּד instead of מַצֹּר. This was both his thought and his action: and, acc. vv. 2-4, not in vain.—

Ver. 2: upon *the tablets*, upon the public ones, which were put up in the marketplace, on which public announcements were engraved in large popular characters, *in order that he may run past that reads it*, that everyone may read it readily. Similarly Isa. viii. 1; xxx. 8. The reason for this, ver. 3: the vision is still for the time, therefore not yet for the immediate present, but to unfold itself in the course of time until a term which Yahvé alone knows; comp. the later repetition Dan. xi. 27, 35, (viii. 19) and explanation x. 14; viii. 26; Ez. xii. 27; yet it shall *pant* or hasten to the end, to fulfilment, so that if it is not fulfilled immediately, it may be confidently expected. In the first half of the great oracle, ver. 4, the Chaldean is not mentioned by name, for we have here the style of concise inscriptions and monuments, but he is intended and may be easily recognized; כַּפְשׁוֹ בּוֹ as Job iv. 21; the *just man* is plain from i. 4, 13. Thus the entire oracle with its two

halves presents the two great truths which at that time comprised everything; and with inimitable brevity and decision neither more nor less is said than the exact case demanded: no premature hope is excited, but by silence regarding it, the outlook is opened upon an increase of the sufferings in the immediate future, while the true and final hope is not cut off.

With this the oracle is really closed: but the prophetic impulse, having once been so powerfully aroused, cannot immediately abandon its higher position and accordingly at least a further prophetic consideration and expectation is subjoined concerning the first half of the oracle, proceeding from the nature of the drunkenness, the insolent pride. Wine, drunkenness, is a dangerous companion, it appears so amiable and yet deceives the man who indulges it, in that it at last renders him senseless and helpless and gives him over to general mockery, Prov. xx. 1; xxiii. 29-35. Thus is it in this case of the Chaldean: his drunkenness and pride, in which he like hell swallows all the nations that he can lay his hands upon, will not bring to him profit, as he imagines it will, but will some day cause all oppressed nations bitterly to mock at him and his follies, which bring with them their own punishment, and to give vent to their pent up indignation in songs, which though generally in the form of *proverbs*



## 1.

O he that heapeth up what is not his—till when? and burdeneth himself with heavy debts: || will not suddenly thy creditors rise up, and thy tormentors awake, | that thou wilt be for booty to them? || Because thou hast stripped many nations, all the remaining nations will strip thee | —on account of the murder of men and of the wrong of the earth, of the city and of all dwelling therein! ||

## 2.

10 O he that seeketh an evil gain for his house, | to set his nest on high, to deliver himself from the hand of ruin: || thou hast counselled shame to thine house, | —cutting off many nations and hurting thyself! || For the stone from the wall will complain, | and the beam from the wood answer it: ||

and without names, yet like easily guessed riddles overflow with unmistakable irony against the Chaldean, Prov. i. 6. יְהִיר as Prov. xxi. 24; נֶאֱהָר is not=נֶאֱהָר beautiful, seemly, which would not be suitable here. Thus arises, as it were in a concert of the nations, as if sounding from the distant future, the satirical song upon the various follies of the

tyrant who is just being brought precisely by them to his ruin (comp. Isa. xiv. 4 sq.); and there arise five strophes of three verses each, very similar in plan and structure. Each of them mentions one of the false endeavours of the tyrant and shows its innate folly and the punishment involved in it.

1. Covetousness and rapacity: but unjustly obtained property never becomes true, peaceful possession, but remains a mere weight of debt, whose

creditors (the rightful owners) will very soon rise up to demand by force the restoration of their wealth! Isa. xxxiii. 1; on עֲבֹטֶיךָ, see § 157 a.

2. The passion of caring only for his own house and family by force and cunning, a passion to which young reigning families are often prone. But in vain does a man thus seek to secure himself against the possible dangers of the future, to build his nest very high upon an impregnable fortress: while with this object in view the measure is adopted of cutting off many nations to build the

fortress with their blood and property, the man's own soul is wronged (Prov. xx. 2), he himself is destroyed; what an ignominious plan therefore, to destroy many nations (הַעֲרֹר inf.) whilst he loses himself (וְחִשָּׁא circumstantial clause)!\* For the revenge must follow, demanded by the stones and beams of a fortress built for such a purpose, v. 11; Luke xix. 40.

\* On this clause see the Author's *Grammars* §§ 306, 341; and Driver's *Hebrew Tenses*, §§ 156-169.—Tr.

## 3.

O he that buildeth the city with blood, | and foundeth the state with wrong: || surely behold it is established with Yahvé of Hosts, | that the nations shall weary themselves for the fire, and the peoples labour for vanity! || For the earth will be filled to know Yahvé's glory, | as the waters cover the sea. ||

## 4.

15 O he that giveth his neighbour to drink | pouring out for him thy poison (and also maketh him drunk), | in order to look upon his nakedness: || thou feastedst rather on shame than honour: drink thou also and show the foreskin! | let the cup of the right hand of Yahvé be turned against thee, and utter disgrace upon thy dignity! || For Lebanon's severity will cover thee, the devastation of the beasts terrify thee | —on account of the murder of men and of the wrong of the earth, of the city and of all dwelling therein! ||

3. The passion for building generally, which was a characteristic feature of the Babylonians, Herod. i. 184, 185. Although thereby many a useful erection might result, that renown which is sought by magnificent buildings is in the case of this tyrant based upon a false foundation, upon cruelty and wrong towards those with whose sweat and blood the buildings are erected

(Mic. iii. 10), it cannot therefore continue, only for the fire, for devastation, shall these nations who are used for the buildings (ver. 10) have laboured; lasting splendour has that only that is founded in Yahvé, as, acc. Isa. xi. 9, the knowledge of the glory of Yahvé alone shall some day fill the earth in inexhaustible floods.

4. The delight which in reality every barbarous nation takes in the conquest and destruction of more civilized nations. That is as when a man rejoices to make his neighbour drunk with poisoned wine, that he may then feast his eyes upon his helplessness and nakedness, Gen. ix. 21 sq.; and as a fact the vanquished who can neither help nor deliver himself, is like a man who lies drunken upon the ground, Nah. iii. 11: but he who finds his highest pleasure in such a spectacle of shame, shall experience the same in his own person, he that gives to another

the cup of such stupefaction and shame shall himself drink it from Yahvé's hand, since his turn also (and as uncircumcised his disgrace will be still greater) will come to show himself in his nakedness. But even Lebanon, whose cedars and other ornaments he delighted to destroy (comp. Isa. xxxvii. 24) cries out, with its numerous animals hunted from their repose, for revenge against the violator of all rights! Instead of יחיתן, which supplies no proper meaning, יחיתֶהּ must be read, with LXX; on קיקלֶהּ see § 158 c. Ver. 15, ואף שֶׁכֶּר, וְאִם שֶׁכֶּר

## 5.

What profited ever a graven-image that its former graved it, molten-image and teacher of lies, | that he who formeth his own form trusteth thereupon, to make dumb idols? || O he that saith to wood "awake!" "move thyself!" to the stone silent! it shall teach? | behold it is overlaid with gold and silver, and no spirit at all within it! ||

20 *But Yahvé is in His holy palace: | be still before Him all the earth! ||*

is, acc. § 351 c, a continuation of מִשְׁקֶה, while in the middle of a sentence, which really contains a direct address to a

person, the second person is introduced with greater animation.

5. Idolatry, which stultifies the Chaldean as all other heathen: what, according to all experience, has a graven or molten image, a lying teacher, *i.e.* a dumb idol, from which oracles and teaching are expected and which can nevertheless give no true instruction, how has that profited him who trusted to it, *i.e.* to his own human image! how therefore is that tyrant to be regarded who expects instruction and help from wood and stone, which he has himself first had prepared and hung with ornament!

But enough of idols and their worshippers! For in opposition to them the true God just now makes himself mani-

fest, his living presence becoming again felt amongst us close at hand, near to us in his temple and waiting to reply to our prayers: before Him therefore let the whole earth keep silence and worship Him in silent prayer! Thus the transition to the following prayer is prepared for, and the final strophe has, on account of this transition, a somewhat different structure from the previous one, it being as it were suddenly interrupted by ver. 20.—The words *be silent before him*, here and Sseph. i. 7, were evidently a standing phrase in the temple service, when the most solemn act was about to commence.

### 3. *The human Reflection: the Prophet in the Community*, CH. iii.

This piece, in which the prophet appears with the whole congregation in the temple, has again a character and complexion of its own; it is arranged as a psalm to be sung and played, and has accordingly musical notes attached to it similar to those which have been explained in the *Dichter des Alten Bundes*. But as caused by the preceding portion of the book, it is again closely connected with what has gone before in respect of

subject-matter and circumstances. For it really reveals simply those feelings which are powerfully aroused in the believing mind by the great and decisive oracle, ii. 4. The higher voice is no longer heard: but the prophet is not now left to himself, he is in that place to which he has been referred, in the midst of the congregation gathered together for solemn worship. With what feelings, therefore, does he now receive, in and with the congregation, the granted prophecy? How does earth answer to heaven after the latter has stooped to it? This must be shown now in the assembled community. —And here it may well appear that feelings of a very different nature are called up by the above oracle, ii. 4, precisely in as far as it concerns Israel particularly. In the first place, fear of a calamitous future: for the oracle has expressly not promised amelioration and succour for the moment, on the contrary, by its silence and its reference to faithfulness as the solitary means of life, opened a prospect of the continuance, indeed the increase, of the present calamities; fear, in fact, horror, is therefore the first feeling. But, on the other hand, the profounder and pure hope was not completely cut off by the oracle, faithfulness was called for and hope was encouraged; and in aid of hope is further added the reminiscence of the wonderful deliverances Yahvé wrought in ancient times. Hence the prayers and songs which are now heard in the congregated community consist of the conflict and struggle of these two entirely opposed feelings, until finally pure hope triumphs. At first, ver. 2, the fear of the troubled heart of the prophet is expressed in a short prayer, with the tone of an intercession: but immediately, as if in entire independence of this, the customary hymn of praise of the congregation chimes in, vv. 3-15, proceeding as always from the memory of the ancient deeds in the deliverance of the nation at the beginning and the foundation of the community, but this time rising and expatiating with peculiar warmth of recollection and thanksgiving. We have pure and simple joy, an imperishable joy



in the true God and eternal Lord of his community, such as cannot be overcome by anything in the present, like a wholly foreign note of perennial and swelling joy, sounding into that time of deepest despair: and yet the necessary foundation-note of the feeling of the community when in the presence of God, the note that necessarily rises at every period of most painful distress from the imperishable memory of the ancient deliverance wrought by Yahvé at the Red Sea; there is here an actual similarity, for as then the Egyptian in his wild delight imagined that he had already annihilated poor Israel, so now the Chaldean. Comp. Ps. lxxvii., which is very similar. The prophet hears that song: accordingly after this song has ceased, it is true his fear again returns, vv. 16, 17, but it is this time immediately overpowered by pure hope, which alone remains in final possession, vv. 18, 19.

The entire proceedings which here take the form of discourse and song are, therefore, of a very agitated, dithyrambic character, high hope being obtained only by great struggles with fear: hence in the heading the piece is referred to this peculiar style of music. But the longest portion, vv. 3-15, forms a hymn of itself in this style, after the manner of such early historical lyrics as Judges v. Ex. xv., and with them quite fresh in the memory; it is not till this hymn begins that the language and complexion of the piece assumes the higher purely poetic garb. It is also certain that it was at some time performed in the congregation, probably often subsequently repeated: the musical notes, vv. 1, 3, 9, 13, 19, betray another hand than that of the prophet.—With regard to the structure of the five strophes of the chief hymn and of the other strophes, comp. the remarks *Dichter des Alten Bundes*, I a, p. 299 sq.

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[Prayer, by Habaqqŭq the Prophet; in dithyrambics.]\*

(The prophet)

iii.

1 Yahvé I heard thy oracle, I was afraid!

Yahvé—thy work in the course of the years revive,  
in the course of the years make it known,  
in rage remember mercy! ||

1.

(The congregation)

God cometh from Tæman, and the Holy One from the mount  
of Paran, [*Séla*]

his majesty covered the heavens, and his fame filled the earth;  
and a splendour as of pure light ariseth, rays from his side,  
and the covering of his glory is there!

5 Before him goeth death's sting,  
and death's flame followed his track.

I. Ver. 2. *Thy oracle*: that of ii. 4. And the first request is, therefore, that he may not slacken *his work*, *i.e.*, really never slacken the deliverance, the redemption of men, his salvation, and let it become dead, but revive and so make

it felt manifestly in the midst of the course of the years (comp. the very similar idea, Ps. xc. 16), therefore in *rage*, *i.e.*, in calamity like the present, so much the more think of mercy.

II. 1. The hymn of praise, vv. 3-15, unfolds in five symmetrical strophes its historical subject, the description of the revelation that once took place at the Red Sea. The appearance of the miraculous assistance is as the perceptible revelation of Yahvé: and thus the first strophe describes the first rise of the light of that time, and forthwith presents with a graphic imagination an event of ancient times as if it were present, § 136 b. From Taeman in Edóm and from the mountain of the

desert Pharan, *i.e.*, from the sacred pastures which under Moses also were the most sacred of Israel (comp. *History of Israel*, II. 189 sq. (II. 267 sq.)), he comes (Judges v. 4; Deut. xxxiii. 2), his majesty and glory (תהלה the same as שֶׁם), immediately shines as he appears over the entire world, covers the heavens and fills the earth: there he stands now, ver. 4, shining in the heavens like the brightest light, *i.e.*, the sun (Job xxxi. 26), sending forth beams from his hand or side, and there

\* In his *Dichter des Alten Bundes I a*, p. 229, the author says on the term שְׁבִירָן: "This word denotes a wandering, devious, crooked, course, when thought, feeling and tune rapidly change with the new strophe: and as a fact this more passionately excited, rapidly changing, and, as it were, wandering style of music accords well with the sense in the two cases where a lyric is thus denominated, Ps. vii.; Hab. iii."—*Tr.*

## 2.

He stood and shook the earth, beheld and tossed the nations,  
 and the everlasting mountains fell to dust,  
 the ancient hills bowed, the ancient paths before him.  
 Under calamity saw I Kushan's tents:  
 the curtains of the land of Midian tremble.

:        :        :        :        :

## 3.

What, against rivers is Yahvé wrath, . . . ?  
 or against rivers is thine anger, or against the sea thy wrath,  
 that thou didst ride upon thy horses, thy chariots of salvation,  
 didst bare thy brow bare, sevenfold spear-charges of vic-  
 tory [*Séla*]  
 rivers thou dividest to land ?

where the rays are seen to be shot forth  
 his majesty is present, yet not quite  
 naked and to be seen with the outward  
 eye, but in its *covering*, since precisely  
 the splendour of the light forms its  
 covering, Isa. iv. 5, 6; Ex. xl. 34;

2. In such splendour making his  
 appearance from the north of Sinai, and  
 at the very first glance, which he casts  
 around him as it were to take cogni-  
 zance of them, shaking the earth and  
 the nations, he makes his way towards  
 the place where the divine help was  
 then most needed, therefore from the  
 high surroundings of Sinai, ver. 6 *b*,  
 on towards the north-west over the  
 plains where the tents of the Arabians  
 stand, ver. 7, unto the Red Sea, vv. 8, 9;  
 and everywhere everything bows before  
 him immediately with dismay! The  
 ancient mountains, over which such  
 countless numbers of men passed from  
 the earliest times without their ever

Num. ix. 15; at the same time, ver. 15,  
 unapproachable, like a sacred fire which  
 has angels of death around it to guard  
 it, and destroying everything impure  
 that comes too near it, comp. 1 Sam. v.,  
 2 Sam. vi. 7.

being in the least shaken thereby, fell  
 into dust forthwith and sank before him,  
 as from fear and in homage (Iliad xiv.  
 285)! The tents of the Arabian na-  
 tions between Sinai and the Red Sea  
 might be seen to tremble as if overtaken  
 by some great calamity, since neither  
 are they pure before the Holiest. How-  
 ever, the end of the strophe has not  
 been preserved in its full extent. The  
 nation כושן, which can neither in point  
 of language nor according to the context  
 be intended for כוש, *Æthiopia*, must  
 be a small nation on a par with Midian,  
 therefore probably the same as יקשן,  
 which is placed beside Midian, Gen.  
 xxv. 2, 3.

3. What new phenomenon by the sea?  
 If even mountains and nations must feel  
 that Yahvé comes this time also as in  
 wrath in order to scatter irresistibly all  
 that is opposed to him, how much more

must that be apparent in the case of the  
 sea, which refuses to make a passage for  
 his people Israel and to overcome whose  
 resistance is the immediate object of  
 the divine march! An entirely new

## 4.

- 10 Mountains saw thee they were in travail, the flood of waters overflowed,  
 the deep gave its voice, the height lifted up its hands;  
 sun, moon stood at home  
 on account of the light of thy travelling arrows, on account  
 of the lightning-sheen of thy spear;  
 in wrath thou marchest through the earth,  
 in anger thou crushest the nations.

spectacle, therefore, such as had never before been witnessed, appears: as if he were wroth with the water, he seems to drive up like a war-god upon conquering horses and chariots (ישועה § 291 b), approaching forthwith to bare his arms and to shoot, arrows and spears in showers, comp. ver. 11 (Isa. xxii. 6), until the streams give way before such weapons, divide so that there is land where the sea had just been! Ps. cxiv. 5, 6; Isa. xi. 15. As a matter of course, the divine arrows and spears were lightnings and thunderbolts; they are similarly mentioned together, ver. 11 (מטה, vv. 9 and 14, is to be understood like שֶׁטֶט of the shaft of spears, spears);

that they fly from him in showers, is not less evident, and if a commander, 2 Sam. xviii. 14, takes three spears, Yahvé can at one time hurl showers of seven (שְׁבַעַת st. const. plur. from שָׁבוּעַ, a collection of seven, a heptas, as we say a decade, myriad). Since the true weapon of Yahvé is the word, we might think that with אֶמֶר, in the sense of word, this idea was introduced into the midst of the warlike description, comp. Isa. xi. 4: but in this connexion of the members and of the whole discourse, it is more suitable to understand אֶמֶר in the sense of victory, Ps. lxviii. 12, corresponding to the previous ישועה.

4. But immediately a new, equally wonderful, and yet a totally opposite spectacle: for after the deliverance of Israel from the waves of the sea, it is necessary to punish the heathen in the same sea. Before him, when he, as will soon appear, in wrath against the wicked sets in order the affairs of the nations, everything in the world must give way as before the one victoriously advancing warrior; mountains and seas, as is briefly repeated, ver. 10, from the previous strophe, with added figures, are in pangs and trembling when they behold him, but the height raises its head in prayer to beg for mercy; the outflow, the flood of waters (as the Red

Sea shows) overflows, while the deep, troubled from above and below, loudly mourns, likewise praying for mercy (as the Skamandros in Homer);—sun and moon even, ver. 11, lose their brightness before the new splendour, remain therefore as it were at home (זָבַלָהּ with the הֵי of motion), do not come forth on account of the splendour of the divine weapons mentioned above, ver. 9, when they are in travelling motion (a thought which recurs at least with regard to the future, Zech. xiv. 6, 7; Isa. xxiv. 23; Rev. xxi. 23); the earth and nations must suffer the just punishment, ver. 12.



## 5.

Wentest forth to save thy people, to save thine Anointed,  
 shatteredst the head from the house of the wicked, making  
     bare the foundation unto the neck ; [*Séla*]  
 boredst through with thy spear-charges the head of his princes,  
     who swept down to scatter me,  
     whose rejoicing was as in ambush to devour the helpless ;  
 15 drovest through the sea thy horses,  
     through the roar of many waters.

(The prophet)

## 1.

I heard and my belly trembled,  
 at the voice my lips quivered,  
 rottenness entereth into my bones,  
 and underneath me I tremble,  
 that I must calmly await the day of distress,  
 at its coming up against the nation to afflict it.

5. Especially the deliverance of the nation, which was before all others the royal (Ex. xix. 6 ; "Zech." ix. 16) and therefore the anointed nation was really the ultimate object of this campaign, in which the hero, in order to complete his work of redemption, was compelled to destroy the implacable enemies of goodness, making his passage through the sea : thus the last strophe gathers up more pointedly as in explanation all that had been said with less brevity in the previous ones. The destruction of Pharaoh with his host is first compared figuratively with the smiting off the head from the house of the wicked (the Egyptian), but such a decapitation of the house as includes its being shaken to the foundations and overthrown, so that the foundation unto the neck, *i.e.* the already decapitated summit, lies exposed (עָרֹרָה acc. § 280

α) ; then, ver. 14 α, more plainly described, where if it is too great a demand to substitute the better reading במטִיך instead of במטִי, the suffix must be referred to רשע, "with the arrow-charges intended for the wicked," which is in any case a hard construction in this place. It is further purposely remarked with what eagerness and savage joy these enemies were then prepared to fall upon the helpless people, like robbers hidden in ambush falling upon a poor, miserable victim, comp. i. 13-17. In passing, it may be observed, that the word "anointed," where it does not occur so clearly and simply as ver. 13, in connexion with the nation as a description of it, can never signify the nation, inasmuch as standing alone it denotes something quite different from the nation.

## 2.

For the fig doth not blossom,  
 and there is no yield on the vines,  
 the fruit of the olive deceiveth,  
 and the field produceth no food;  
 from the fold the flock faileth,  
 and there is no beast in the stall,

## 3.

Yet—in Yahvé will I rejoice,  
 be glad in the God of my salvation;  
 Yahvé the Lord is my strength,  
 and make my feet as those of hinds,  
 and upon the heights causeth me to walk.

[*For performance with the Temple music.*]

III. Vv. 16, 17. Fear, yea, horror seized and still seizes me from head to foot, (Iliad xiv. 506) through all my members, on this account that I *must rest* for the day of calamity, must simply possess myself in patience, without any immediate hope and deliverance, until the great day of trial and punishment, namely, until it cometh up against the nation to distress it (§ 337 b) like a man of war, Job xv. 24; the clause לַעֲלֹת is an evident explanation of the foregoing לַיּוֹם; the *nation* is Israel itself. If the calamity is not moderated, it progresses unto its extreme limit, unto one of the great days of judgment and

punishment, e.g. the day of the destruction of the temple being such an one under the Chaldeans; and already the entire creation appears to mourn under a presentiment of it, the fruits, the flocks seem to suffer from it, like Hos. iv. 3, and many other passages. We do not know what particular experiences of that year are referred to.—But the strong hope prevails, vv. 18, 19, in words which are almost a complete echo of passages of Ps. xviii.

With regard to לַמְנִצָּח and בְּנִינֹת comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes* I. a. p. 216 sq.\*

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\* In the passage referred to the author derives לַמְנִצָּח from נָצַח, *pure, perfect*: hence in *Piel* to make anything perfect, to arrange anything, to have the direction of it, being then construed with עַל or בְּ. לַמְנִצָּח might then be *the director* of Music. But the preposition לְ introduces a modification, making it best to consider לַמְנִצָּח an impersonal form, acc. § 160 e, with the meaning, *for performance*. The second word בְּנִינֹת supplies the necessary complement of the noun. בְּנִינֹת means the *strings*, and then the *Temple music* generally. The two words together, therefore: *for performance with the Temple music.*—Tr.

## 4. AN ANONYMOUS PROPHET.

“ZAKH,” XII. 1—XIII. 6, XIV.

xii.

1. *The High Oracle of the Word of Yahvé concerning Israel.*

Compare Vol. I., p. 99, sq.

We have here two pieces, written soon after each other, by a prophet from whom nothing further has been preserved, and whose age, position, and country we are able to conjecture from his own words alone. It is apparent at once that he refers solely to Jerusalem and Yuda, and that the name Israel in the heading xii. 1, therefore, can only denote the southern kingdom as it alone remained long after the destruction of the northern one. It is further evident that these two pieces were not written earlier than some 12 years after Habaqqûq, a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem.\* It is true the Chaldeans are nowhere expressly mentioned: but the tremendous danger of a conquest of Jerusalem of which these pieces, belonging in any case to late times, speak, as well as the rising of all the other surrounding nations against the city, as it is here described, points to the last years of the city, when under the protection of the Chaldeans all the ancient animosities of the neighbours again broke out, 2 Kings xxiv. 2 sq., as also appears from other contemporary prophets. But the most remarkable circumstance is that the Chaldeans at that time compelled the inhabitants of the territory of Yuda to take up arms against the capital Jerusalem, xii. 2-7; xiv. 14: and inasmuch as these and other circumstances of the territory of Yuda as distinct from Jerusalem are here particularly referred to, we may justly suppose that the prophet was not like Yéremyá in Jerusalem at that

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\* With regard to another conjecture that might be made as to the age of this prophet, comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 271 (III. p. 803). I have often wavered between these two possibilities, but have always come back to that which is adopted above.

time, but lived in the country like Mikha in earlier times. In fact, we have every reason to discern in this wholly peculiar position a chief determining cause of the distinctive matter and tone of these prophecies. For the most distinctive feature of this prophet is his uncommonly elevated and confident hope of the deliverance of Jerusalem and Yuda in spite of all the dangers and threatenings with which it was so plainly assailed; at a time when Yéremyá within the walls of the capital has come to despair of the possibility of a successful resistance of the Chaldeans and is exhorting the inhabitants to remain quiet, this prophet with boundless courage and divine confidence looks all these dangers in the face, holds firmly with unbowed spirit to the similar promises of older prophets, such as Isaiah xxix., and anticipates that precisely from that moment when the blind rage of the destroyers shall break loose upon the sanctuary, a miraculous power will dash them to pieces, and that this must be the commencement of the Messianic prosperity both at home and abroad. This burning hope, this intense revolt of the spirit from the impending sad doom, is nevertheless after all nothing but the reaction against the unnatural position in which the barbarity of the Chaldeans had placed Yuda with regard to Jerusalem: unable to bear the thought that Yuda shall help to destroy even Jerusalem and the Temple, the prophet prefers to anticipate that a higher, irresistible power will in that case urge Yuda to fight against its heartless tyrants, and that this turn of events will be the commencement of salvation primarily for Yuda, then for Jerusalem, finally for all the ancient blessed hopes of Messianic times, xii. 6, 7. The Messianic hopes are in the case of this prophet, which is after all the chief thing, just as exalted and just as pure as in the case of other genuine prophets; and although prophecy had in that time become wholly degenerate, xiii. 2-6, this prophet, with respect to the purity of his thought, worthily continues the line of the older greater prophets. The first piece,



## 1. XII. I.-XIII. 6,

presents in a complete manner in its first half, xii. 1-9, the anticipation with regard to that marvellous turn of affairs; in the second, xii. 10—xiii. 6, there follows the encouraging description of the better age which will then be possible: each of these halves falls into two equal strophes. The piece ch. xiv. also falls into four equal strophes of the same number of verses as the piece before us.

## 1.

Thus saith Yahvé who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth, and formed man's spirit within him: || behold I make Jerusalem a cup of staggering for all the nations around; | and also Yuda will be compelled to besiege Jerusalem! || and I will on that day make Jerusalem a lifting stone for all the nations; | all who lift it will crush themselves, yet against it gather all the Heathen of the earth. || —On that day, saith Yahvé, will I smite every horse with stupefaction and his rider with confusion, | but upon the house Yuda open mine eyes, and every horse of the nations smite with blindness, ||  
5 that the heads of Yuda say in their heart: | “strength are to me Jerusalem's inhabitants through Yahvé of Hosts their God!” ||

1. In the prophetic introduction, ver. 1, amongst the deeds of Yahvé special prominence is given to this, that he created the spirit within men, himself thus originating the prophetic faculty and mission, that faculty which the prophet is now availing himself of, comp. Amos iv. 13. The two figures of vv. 2, 3, at once embrace the entire thought of the piece: Jerusalem will be to all (1) a cup of intoxication, therefore all will hasten to taste the beautiful city, to make themselves drunk with its wine (and the conqueror intoxicates himself with blood and booty), but they will then find out that it is as if a cup of maddening wine had been presented to them, from which they themselves fall down senseless and overcome, ver. 4; Ps. lix. 16; Hab. ii.

15, 16;—(2) a lifting stone, a heavy stone which has to be raised as it were in sport, so that he that lifts it gets the victory: true the reward of victory is attractive, everyone competes in the endeavour to raise the heavy stone, but it is too heavy for them all, and only inflicts wounds upon them as they attempt to raise it. But thus early, ver. 2 b, the thought finds utterance, *also upon Yuda will the turn come with the siege, i.e.* Yuda will be compelled to advance to the siege, *against Jerusalem*. The accents very correctly connect **בְּמַצֹּר** with **יְהִיָּה**. The same thing is said in less figurative language, vv. 4, 5: whilst an alarm from heaven and a mortal panic, xiv. 13; Isa. xxxvii. seizes horse and rider *i.e.* the Heathen (of whom the former are symbols), the

## 2.

On that day will I make the heads of Yuda as a fire-pan near ships, and as a fire-torch near sheaves, that they devour on the right and on the left all the nations around, | and Jerusalem still remain in its place in Jerusalem; || and Yahvé will succour the tents of Yuda first, | in order that the glorying of the house of David and that of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not too great for Yuda. || --On that day will Yahvé shield Jerusalem's inhabitants, | so that the stumbler amongst them on that day is as David, and the house of David as gods, as Yahvé's angel before them; || thus will I on that day seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. ||

## 3.

10 Then I pour upon David's house and upon Jerusalem's inhabitants a spirit of love and love-seeking, that they look unto

men of Yuda will be marvellously strengthened in their ranks, as by the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, the capital of the true God, feeling themselves filled with higher courage. (The reading *לִישְׁבֵי* found in some MSS. instead *לִי יִשְׁבֵי*, presupposes the other reading of ancient authorities, *אֲמַצְיָא*, in the meaning *I am sufficient* (comp. my comment on Ps. xxxii. 6), *for the in-*

*habitants of Jerusalem through Yahvé*, feel myself with him strong enough to help them: yet in that case we should expect *אֲמַצְיָאֵם*, *let me be sufficient for them*, unless *אֲמַצְיָא* had been a contraction of *אֱלֹהֵי אֲמַצְיָא*. However, the clause, *their God*, is in favour of the reading *לִי אֲמַצְיָא*). The necessary consequences of this are shown in the next strophe.

2. Vv. 6, 7: those who are seized by a higher courage, by burning enthusiasm, are as dangerous to their antagonists, the Heathen, as any fire-pan to the bits of wood lying near it, or a burning torch to sheaves; unexpectedly the glowing spark kindles and the Heathen are its food, so that Jerusalem will not be destroyed by them, but will be preserved precisely where it now stands; and that thus the Yudeans experience salvation *first* before Jerusalem, will serve the further good purpose, that the capital, as so easily happens and has already been painfully felt by the country districts, may not think itself so much above the country.—

Thus then will Yahvé save the besieged Jerusalem, vv. 8, 9, and even during the siege a higher courage will be felt there, so that even the weaker man amongst them who stumbles, becomes nevertheless a hero such as David once was, the stronger ones therefore and the leaders, they of the Davidic house, waxing great in similar proportions, become as it were superhuman beings, as angels that lead and command the army, Ex. xxiii. 20. Amongst the latter, therefore, would have been the Messiah, only this prophet nowhere gives prominence to such a single person in particular.

3. Vv. 10-14. This better state of things which then follows is internally

a new spirit from above (from Joel iii. 1), which as feeling is grace and love,

him, him whom they pierced, | and mourn over him as one mourneth over the only one, and sob over him as over the first-born ! || On that day will the mourning be as great in Jerusalem as the mourning of Hadadrimmôn in the valley Megiddon, || so that the land mourneth family by family, the family of David's house apart and their wives apart, the family of Nathan's house apart and their wives apart, || the family of Levi's house apart and their wives apart, | the family of Shim'i apart and their wives apart, || all the families that are left, family by family apart | and their wives apart. ||

as action the endeavour to gain more and more of the divine love, or the seeking of love and grace, prayer. The relation to the Yudeans who had been just mentioned, vv. 2-7, is precisely an illustration of it. Many an one belonging to them, under the most revolting compulsion of the Heathens, must fall on account of his zeal for the truth, pierced by the enraged heathen, and many an one has probably already fallen thus as a martyr: but his brightest reward will be that the inhabitants of the capital, once more brought under the influence of the spirit of true love, then look upon him with compassion and reverence and most deeply mourn over him, from Amos viii. 10, in some such wise as people now mourn over the fallen King Yosia who fell similarly as a martyr at Hadadrimmôn in the valley Megiddon, 2 Kings xxiii. 29; 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 (comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 242 (III. 762 sq.)), indeed as they quite generally mourn for him on great festivals, in every family, in every separate circle of men and women; by way of example some families of Jerusalem are specially named. vv. 12, 13, but, be it observed, only such as the prophet deemed worthy to survive the dangers and to enter the better future which he here describes, הנשארות ver. 14. This completes,

therefore, in a certain way, the thought of vv. 6, 7; the sense of דקר ver. 10, is clear from the context, in which lamentation for the dead is spoken of, as well as from the special usage of this prophet, xiii. 3; but it is better to read with many MSS. אליו instead of אלי. The first person is really wholly unsuitable here: it does not harmonize with the following ספרו עליו and introduces into the Old Testament the absurd notion, that persons will bitterly lament over Yahvé (for no one else could be thought of but Yahvé) as over one that is dead and can never come back again. The real idea of the passage is, that a martyr does not fall in vain, but will one day be mourned for from universal regard: a thought which is subsequently applied to the case of a much greater martyr, John xix. 37; Rev. i. 7.—One might naturally enough be tempted to apply the words to the great Martyr whose memory has been perpetuated, “Isa.” liii. (see below), as if the meaning were, it is time the people of Jerusalem should come profoundly to feel how great a wrong has been done him. But as he is not anywhere else in the whole piece, xii.-xiii. 6, in any way referred to, there is no reason to suppose any reference here; the passage is plain enough when read in the light of what has preceded, and everywhere

## XIII.

## 4.

- 1 On that day will a fountain be opened to David's house and to Jerusalem's inhabitants for atonement and purification. || And then on that day, saith Yahvé of Hosts, will I cut off the idols' names out of the land, that they be no more mentioned; | and also the soothsayers and the spirit of uncleanness will I cause to disappear from the land, || so that when anyone prophesieth any more, his natural parents say to him "thou shalt not live, because thou hast spoken lies in Yahvé's name," | and his natural parents thrust him through when he prophesieth. || Then on that day the soothsayers are ashamed, every one of his vision when he prophesieth, | and will not wear a hairy mantle—to deceive; || but he saith "no prophet am I, | a husbandman am I, since men own me from my youth;" || and if it is said to him "what are these wounds between thy hands?" | he answereth "such as I received amongst my dearest friends!"

Jerusalem and the country are carefully distinguished; we can only say, that at that time a distinguished martyr in the cause of Jerusalem and the house of David and the true religion may have fallen shortly before without receiving the just acknowledgment of the capital, and there may be here reference to him. Comp. also my *Johanneische Schriften*, II., p. 112, and *Jahrbücher der Bibl. Wiss.* X., p. 193. In any case, the example quoted in

4. xiii. 1-6. Externally the new spirit will so operate that the existing imperfections and sins cease; a fountain will publicly flow at the Sanctuary for atonement and for purification, ver. 1, (זָרַח, acc. Num. xix. 9 sq., the correlative of זָרַח, inasmuch as the sacred water is itself impure and detestable, on account of its having washed off and absorbed the sinful stains, but as regards its operation produces purification, comp. *Alterthümer des V. Isr.*, p. 201, (172); the same perennial water of paradise, which in

illustration, ver. 11, shows that the lamentation described is not for one who met his end by his own fault, but for one who was greatly esteemed and deeply loved.—The family of Nathan was more closely related to the royal house, acc. 2 Sam. v. 14, that of Shim'i more distantly (see *History of Israel*, III., p. 210 (III., p. 285)): the order in which they follow is therefore correct.

another respect is the only reviving water, xiv. 8. Coming to points of detail, the idols will then disappear with their names even, acc. Hos. ii. 19, and every impure spirit, even the prophetic: and because the great multitude of the prophets had then so wholly degenerated, just as one may in our day observe a similar dreadful degeneracy of German newspapers and many other branches of literature, we can understand how this prophet can desire and anticipate that rather than this all prophets might entirely cease, and that a



time might come when the courage of a young prophet, who purposes to enter the path of lies trodden by the old ones, will be seriously damped by his own parents, ver. 3, when the prophets themselves also become gradually, following the change for the better, ashamed of their lying oracles, if such should still be put forth, and no more put on the prophet's mantle (2 Kings i. 8; Matt. iii. 4; Rev. xi. 3) to conceal their lies under it, ver. 4, when, on the contrary, every man who has been a prophet prefers to disown his former profession and his former privileges

(that he is Yahvé's property, and therefore responsible to no one else), ver. 5, and, when any one reminds him, for instance, of the scars of the wounds which had once been inflicted by his parents, ver. 3, asserts that he had received them without ill-will or bitterness from his patrons, who had sought only his good, ver. 6. The parents in the best sense of the term may also be meant by **מֵאֲהָבָה** as the simple antithesis of **מִשְׁנֵאָה**, if for some reason they cannot be mentioned by their proper names, *e.g.* from shame in the presence of strangers.

## 2. CH. XIV.

This piece must have been written somewhat later, when events had made it more and more improbable that Jerusalem would not be conquered at all, and treated as a conquered city by barbarous enemies. Yet, even in that case, this prophet was still unwilling to give up the prophetic anticipations of earlier prophets and those of his own which he had formerly delivered: so bravely in the midst of the most evident danger does he hold fast to the ancient expectation, after the great deliverance of Jerusalem at the time of Sancherib, Isa. ch. xxxvii., seemed to justify the most extravagant expectations for the future, comp. Ps. lix. Accordingly, to his mind it appeared as if Jerusalem must really suffer the abomination of a conquest, but then when the work of the destroyers should be half finished, that great deliverance indicated in the previous piece would come and thus the Sanctuary be miraculously preserved, the reformed Messianic age would still come in that form. Encouraging pictures of that reformed age compose half the piece: yet whilst the second strophe hastens to them, the third resumes the thought of the first, so that the Messianic pictures are not completed before the fourth strophe, which corresponds to the second.

## XIV.

## 1.

- 1 Behold a day cometh from Yahvé, | then will thy spoil [O Jerusalem] be divided in thy midst! || And I gather all the Heathen against Jerusalem for war, | and the city will be taken, the houses plundered, the women violated, | and half of the city goeth into captivity: | yet the residue of the people will not be cut off from the city. || For Yahvé goeth forth and fighteth in those days, | as he once fought on the day of war: || and his feet stand on that day upon the Mount of Olives which lieth before Jerusalem on the East, | then the Mount of Olives divideth in the midst thereof towards the East and West into a very great ravine, one half of the mountain removeth towards  
5 the North, the other towards the South, || and ye flee into the ravine of my mountains, for unto Assél will the ravine of the mountains reach, | ye flee as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of ‘Uzzia, King of Yuda, | and then Yahvé my God entereth, all Saints with thee! ||

## 2.

And then on that day there will not be sunshine with cold and ice, || but there will be one day (it is known to Yahvé!), not day and not night, | but towards evening there will be

1. Vv. 1-5. Jerusalem will, it is true, be conquered amidst all the horrors of war, but only half of its inhabitants carried away, vv. 1, 2. For just as Yahvé formerly went forth to war by the Red Sea, so will he now come again to the rescue by war, ver. 3: and since he approaches from the sacred quarter of the heavens, from the East, he will first appear in war upon the Mount of Olives; but the first step of this warrior immediately shakes the high mountain so that it cleaves asunder from East to West, the one-half therefore moving to the North, the other to the South. But this will be the commencement of the deliverance: into the ravine thus formed at the feet of the

Mighty One and as into his protection, a great ravine which extends through all the sacred hills unto the western end of the Temple Hill (where probably Assél was situated), the besieged and conquered people will flee, they will flee as formerly before the suddenly yawning earthquake in the time of ‘Uzzia, Amos i. 1, and yet only under his protection who, thus announcing himself, attended by his saints, or angels, will make his entry into the closely threatened Temple! Thus the imagination of the prophet conceives the development of the marvellous drama; comp. Ez. xxxviii. 20, 21. The word **נכס** is to enter, into the Temple, as ver. 18.

2. Vv. 6-11. Some pictures of the perfect condition of things which will

then be possible. (1) Vv. 6, 7, there is then pure, untroubled, unchanging light,

light again. || And there will on that day go forth living waters from Jerusalem, partly to the front sea and partly to the hinder sea; | in summer and in winter that will be. || And Yahvé will be king over all the earth; | on that day will Yahvé be one,  
 10 and his name one. || All the land will change as into a plain from Géba' unto Rimmon south of Jerusalem; | and this will be raised and remain in its place from the gate of Benjamin unto the place of the former gate, unto the corner gate and tower Hananel, unto the king's wine presses: || then they dwell therein and there is no more curse, | but Jerusalem will remain secure. ||

## 3.

And this will be the stroke wherewith Yahvé smiteth all the nations that made war against Jerusalem; | his flesh

Rev. xxi. 23: not sunshine interchanging with cold and ice in the dark winter days as is now the case, not day and night, but one light, one day; true, that is a day such as no man has yet seen, but Yahvé knows it, with him it is possible, and he will cause it to come!—(2) Ver. 8, perennial water from the sanctuary, flowing through and reviving the whole land to the East and West, and not failing in the summer, for instance; from Joel iv. 18; ii. 20.—(3) Ver. 9, the knowledge of Yahvé amongst all nations, so that *he* is one, will be felt as the same great sole king by all, and so his name is one, all thus calling upon and worshipping him.—(4) Vv. 10, 11, the glorification of the Sanctuary in the capital, which this prophet, fol-

lowing the ancient anticipation, Isa. ii. 2, conceives in this manner: the whole mountainous district of Yuda from Géba' in the North unto Rimmon in the South changes as it were into a steppe, *i.e.*, an extensive plain (for with the word steppe this idea only is here uppermost), in which Jerusalem alone remains high and exalted, and remains without suffering destruction (which is here in the end the chief thing, to which also the third strophe returns), entire, secure, and with no curse cleaving to it (Rev. xxii. 3) in the whole extent of its present boundaries.—With regard to the places mentioned ver. 10, comp. *History of Israel*, IV., 255 (III., 348 sq.)

3. Vv. 12-15. Whilst the first strophe had shown the manner of Yahvé's coming to the help of Israel, this brings up the description of the manner in which he will visit the sinners who lay hands on the sanctuary: while they are still enjoying sound limbs, suddenly rottenness will attack upon them, in some such way as Isa. xxxvii; or an alarm from heaven will

stupefy them, so that they fight against each other in their confusion, Judges vii. 22; Ez. xxxviii. 21, and thus conquered, the forced help of the country availing them nothing, will lose all their spoil again, ver. 1; and as the rider, ver. 12, about to destroy the sanctuary, will suddenly stiffen and rot, so likewise all the cattle of the war, ver. 15, comp. xii. 4.

shall rot while he standeth on his feet, and his eyes will rot in their holes, his tongue rotteth in his mouth ! || And there will on that day go forth a great alarm from Yahvé amongst them, | so that they seize the one the other's hand and the hand of one cometh over that of the other ; || true Yuda also will fight against Jerusalem, | yet the wealth of all the Heathen around will be taken, gold and silver and apparel in  
 15 abundance. || And likewise will the stroke of the horse of the mule of the camel and of the ass and of all cattle in those camps be as this stroke. ||

## 4.

Yet whoever are left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem, | they then come from year to year to do homage to the king Yahvé of Hosts and to keep the feast of tabernacles ; || and whoso amongst the families of the earth cometh not to Jerusalem to do homage to the king Yahvé of Hosts, | upon them the rain will not fall ; || and if the family of Egypt cometh not and will not enter, | so also upon them will the stroke descend wherewith Yahvé smiteth the Heathen that come not to keep the feast of tabernacles ; || this will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all Heathen  
 20 that come not to keep the feast of tabernacles. || — On that day will stand upon the horse's bells “holy unto Yahvé ;” | and the pots in Yahvé's house will be as the bowls before the altar ; || yea every pot in Jerusalem and Yuda will be holy unto Yahvé of Hosts, so that all who sacrifice coming take of them and boil therein, | and there will not be a Kanáanite any more in the house of Yahvé of Hosts on that day. ||

4. Vv. 16-21. But the eye prefers to dwell in contemplation of the cheering picture of the prosperity which will then be possible. Then will be seen, vv. 16-19, the great spectacle of the reformed Heathen from all nations, who are left from these visitations, journeying yearly to the true Sanctuary ; true, then also here and there an omission may perhaps occur, which need create no surprise, inasmuch as the essential Messianic element consists properly only in the prevalence of better things, in-

stead of their being entirely supplanted by their opposite ; Egypt, *e.g.*, the most hostile nation of earlier times, will perhaps not at once submit : but the chastisement from heaven, which all Heathen have at least once so profoundly felt, will then more easily suffice to reform the few that resist with the aid of further lighter punishments, *e.g.*, the cessation of rain, Hos. ii. 23, 24, or when, as in the case of Egypt, not much depends upon that, the cessation of the blessing from above, Isa. xix. 22. The



part.  $\text{יָרֵמְיָה}$  is chosen by the prophet for the sake of variety to indicate the future, instead of  $\text{יְרֵמְיָה}$ , just as xiii. 3, 4, he had used the two forms of the infinitive merely for the sake of variety. The third  $\text{יָ}$  of ver. 18 must be struck out according to the LXX, and the accents altered accordingly.—And then is the time when there will be no more a few things holy and most unholy (a

great imperfection!) as at present, but when everything will be holy, everything pervaded by holiness, the bells of the horses, as well as the plate of gold on the forehead of the Highpriest, Ex. xxviii. 36, every pot as well as the sacrificial bowls; *Kanáanites*, i.e. unclean persons, will then not be found at all in the sanctuary, Ez. xliv. 9; Rev. xxi. 27.

## 5. YÉREMYÁ.

I. Whilst the small books of the three prophets that have just been commented upon enable us to hear only sporadic voices with reference to the last times of the ancient kingdom, the large book of Yéremyá's supplies not only the most complete and distinct picture of those times, but also the most trustworthy testimony concerning a prophet who retains his greatness and power in the midst of the unavoidable disintegrations of ancient prophecy and of the ancient kingdom itself, indeed, as the last great prophet of the Old Testament, represents in many respects for the first time the true perfection of the prophecy of Israel.

1. Yéremyá has that in common with Yesaya that he probably carried on his prophetic labours through half a century, and was able during a period when events that determined the course of long subsequent times were occurring to labour in the centre of the kingdom. That when he first entered upon his public prophetic work in the 13th year of the reign of Yosia, i.e., about 626 B.C., he was quite young, he says himself, i. 6, 7. It is true, belonging to a priest's, though not a high-priest's family,\* i. 1, he sprang not from Jerusalem but from

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\* Later authors, Church Fathers and Rabbis, have supposed that Yéremyá's father Chilqia was the same person as the famous High Priest 2 Kings xxii., an

the small city 'Anathôth, belonging to the priests, in the tribe of Benyamin, north of Jerusalem, i. 1; xxxii. 8; xxxvii. 12; there are indications that he must have dwelt for a considerable time in the city of his birth and have been well known there in his prophetic capacity, xi. 21; in fact, it is apparent from many of his expressions and figures that, unlike Yesaya, he preserved to his later years as vivid a recollection of the towns and fields of the country as the objects of the capital, *e.g.*, the standing phrase "in the towns of Yuda and in the streets of Jerusalem," further v. 4, 5; vi. 1; xxvi. 2; xxxvi. 6; xxxii. 44, etc. But the most important of his earlier discourses were clearly delivered at Jerusalem, where the Temple, partly as the gathering place of the people, and partly, on account of its roomy porticos which were convenient for teaching, presented the best opportunities for prophetic labours, ii. 2; vii. 2; xxxv. 2; xxxvi. 5, 10 sq., and subsequently he took up his permanent abode in the capital and visited his native place only occasionally on matters of business, xxxvii. 12, 13; but in the capital he had not only a few influential friends and patrons amongst the magnates, xxvi. 24; xxxvi. 25; xxxviii. 7 sq., but in his more advanced life also possessed such a reputation that the king Ssedeqia sought his counsel by formal deputations, xxi. 1-3; xxxvii. 3-10, and when this king's magnates compelled him to follow a line of conduct with regard to the Chaldeans opposed to that recommended by the prophet, he at least still listened to his counsel gladly in secret, xxxvii. 17; xxxviii. 14-27. Indeed, even the savage hordes which were formed in the country after the destruction of Jerusalem, with all their defiance of his counsel felt a certain awe and dread of the aged prophet, and would not allow him in any case to go from amongst them, as if he had carried with him a certain sanctity and protection, xlii. 1 sq.; xliii. 1-6.

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entirely unfounded supposition, since it is indicated neither i. 1, nor anywhere else, and is of itself improbable from all that we know of Yéremyá; comp. *History of Israel*, iv. 233 (III. 751 sq.)

Nor is Yéremyá essentially inferior to Yesaya in point of energy, decision, and animation. It is true he is in his inmost nature impressible and tender, diffident and retiring, inclined to melancholy and lamentation, easily carried away by the feeling of the moment, and often succumbing to profound sorrow at the perversity of the world and his own mournful experiences: for however unhappy the times that followed Yosia's death might be, they alone could not produce this excessive tenderness, which is manifested everywhere in his soft, effusive language, nor does it scruple to pour itself out in writing in certain sections where lamentation prevails, xi. 18-20; xiii. 17; xv. 10, 11, 15-18; xvii. 17, 18; xviii. 19-23; xx. 7-18. But when the truth and the spirit of Yahvé call him, or the resisting world provokes him to the contest, he then knows nothing of diffidence and fear, nothing of tenderness and pliability, he contends before the eyes of all with the most decisive energy against every false prophet that misleads the people xxviii. 5 sq.; xxix. 15 sq., 24 sq.; if the truth has not been proclaimed with due faithfulness to the king he goes still as Yesaya did in his day, without hesitancy, to the royal palace xxii. 1-19; xxxiv. 2-7; and although himself of a priestly family, he speaks from the very first with special emphasis against the growing degeneracy of the priests, i. 18; ii. 26; iv. 9, and is never weary of speaking against every kind of arbitrariness, wherever and in whatever form it is found, even in defiance of the magnates and authorities, without fearing either their hostility and plots or, in the end, their mortal hatred, xxxiv. 8-22; xxxvii. 14 sq. And certainly it deserves much great admiration when a soul naturally so diffident and tender is brought by a higher necessity to absolutely fearless action, and constantly grows through a long, perilous, and anxious life in divine strength and assurance, comp. i. 17-19; xv. 19-21; xvii. 9-18; xx. 11-13.

In this respect there are aspects in which Yéremyá exhibits the prophetic character in even a purer and more perfect form

than Yesaya, and thus accomplishes the highest things possible within the limits of Old Testament prophecy.

Yesaya does not merely confirm his words by signs, he also gives signs instead of words where the latter appear too weak, for instance, and violently demands faith, if not in the words in any case in the signs. But in Yéremyá's case the signs have come to bear an entirely different value. For we still see in his case entirely the same energetic public life which is as much occupied with deeds and signs as with words, because it is so little content with the mere word as once spoken that it burns to expound before the eyes of all its truth in signs also, as in actual commencements and endeavours towards the fulfilment of the word. A very mistaken idea would be formed of Yéremyá, if it were supposed that he was occupied with speaking merely, or even with writing merely : on the contrary, he is in his life wholly like the prophets of the former period, labouring directly wherever and however he finds it possible, with original energy and his own personal, active sympathy, and thus also presenting prophetic actions as signs of the future, xix. 1-13 ; xxvii. 1-xxviii. 11 ; xxxii. 8 sq. ; xliii. 9, 10 ; which publicly given signs, narrated as they had been given in actual life, may be easily distinguished from those which the prophet describes in writing merely as the result of subjective experiences xiii. 1 sq. ; xvi. 1 sq. ; xviii. 2 sq. (Yéremyá himself makes this distinction in his narrative, reporting the former only as publicly presented), or which he merely subjoins in words to an oracle xlv. 29, 30, as well as from those which by their very nature allow no public presentation, xxv. 15-29. But the peculiarity of this prophet is that he is satisfied with the simple presentation of signs as they are naturally produced by that living participation in the affairs of men which characterizes the thought and labours of the prophets ; he does not wish the sign to be a substitute for the truth, still less that it should be forced upon men. Thus, in the case of this prophet, prophecy gets rid of the last remnant of the ancient imme-



diateness and violence which still adhered to it in the case of Yesaya: Yéremyá represents in the whole of his long life the pure power of the word or of thought, and of the sign as simply the interpreter and initiator of the thought, without so much as even an involuntary compulsion.

Similarly the language of the prophet is like that of Yesaya full of decision and severity, even against individuals, however high their position might be, xxvi. 12-15; xxxvi. 29-31; xxviii. 12-16; xxix. 24-32: but only in such cases as where the individuals had attempted by impure means and arbitrary interference to hinder the free course of the divine word as the prophet proclaimed it, where therefore as prophet he could not be silent and compliant unless he was prepared to renounce his own mission. On the other hand, there is not the slightest trace in Yéremyá of such violent attacks upon individuals as we find in Yesaya, xxii. 15-25; xxviii. 7 sq.; where his language must be that of censure, it proceeds from the matter itself in its general import, never from the merely personal relations of the individuals, and is directed against them personally only when self-defence makes it necessary. In this respect also prophecy now for the first time frees itself from ancient limitations.

In another respect the times had become still more significantly changed since Yesaya. For in the eighteenth year of the reign of Yosia, 2 Kings xxii. 2, only five years therefore after Yéremyá's first public appearance, that great change in the internal affairs of the kingdom, which we may call the Deuteronomistic reform, had taken place, of which the historical books have so much to say, 2 Kings xxii., xxiii. In consequence of this reform of religion, commanded by the rulers, many abuses at least had been publicly done away (though many of them were again brought into favour as early as the reign of Yoyakím), the requirements of genuine religion were brought once more more vividly before the eyes of the people, and the way was prepared for progress in many ways.

But inasmuch as a sacred book was as such for the first time looked upon with greater reverence as a state-authority, there arose thus early a kind of book-science with its pedantic pride and erroneous learned endeavours to interpret and apply the scriptures; whilst at the same time there arose also a new kind of hypocrisy and idolatry of the letter, through the new protection which the state gave to the religion of the book acknowledged by the law (comp. Ps. 1.). Thus scholastic wisdom came into a conflict with genuine prophecy, a conflict of which we discern scarcely the most distant germs in Yesaya's times (Isa. xxix. 13, 14): and it is instructive to observe how Old Testament prophecy at the period of its last strength and perfection, just before it reaches the stage of irremediable decline, proclaims its eternal truths on this subject also; we find in the very first oration of Yéremyá's that has come down to us, after the reformation under Yosia, the most sublime utterances with regard to this new phenomenon of that age, vii. 22 sq.; viii. 4-9; ix. 23, 24; comp. xviii. 18; even those of the earlier utterances which are comparatively most similar, such as ii. 8; iv. 22; v. 5, are with all their similarity of a somewhat different character.

When we sum up all these facts, we must say that Yéremyá, in an age of very varied and advanced national culture, when the wisdom of the schools even had become powerful, still supplies the model of purest prophetism, a prophetism which attains its true perfection by confining itself within its true limits and to its own instruments, and by labouring within these limitations, which it imposes upon itself in accordance with its own nature, with energy and decision. Accordingly, there crop up in the utterances of this last great prophet the clearest conceptions of the nature of true prophecy, as if Hebrew prophecy only now, just as it becomes perfect, fully discovered its own character and boundaries; no earlier prophet separates so accurately as Yéremyá all lower form of prophecy from those that are genuine and more perfect, dreaming and

enthusiasm from clear intuition and productive, effective action, words of human fancy and passion from pure divine words, xxiii. 9-40, no earlier prophet so consciously and definitely limits true prophecy to the purely spiritual department of proving and testing men and things according to divine truth and of the consequent bold, fearless speech in the name of Yahvé, vi. 27-30; xv. 19; no one refutes the false prophets so thoroughly by exhibiting their own perversity, xxvii. 18-22; xxviii. 6-9, or when he is persecuted relies with such self-forgetfulness upon the simple consciousness that he could not have acted differently, xxvi. 12-15; xi. 19.

2. But while in this way, in respect of its insight into its own nature and dignity, prophecy manifests even advance from Yesaya to Yéremyá, an equally evident decline in power is undermining its foundations; and this decline is also most clearly brought out in the case of this great prophet. In fact, detailed proof may be given of the rapid progress of this decline even during Yéremyá's life and labours.

It is observable in the very language and literary style of this prophet. Just as Yéremyá as prophet continues still essentially to occupy the same elevation as the prophetic models before him, revealing for those times a high degree of independence in his prophetic activity, in the same way his language also is very little dependent upon earlier examples. It is true the entire plan of his large book plainly follows earlier models, not a few details owe their origin to the language and style of older prophets, and very much in the oracles concerning foreign nations, xlvi., xlix., especially is repeated in a merely learned way, with a certain freedom of reproduction, from older pieces, inasmuch as such oracles generally had a different origin from the orations delivered in public life and without doubt always originated rather in a learned way as products of the pen. Nevertheless, making these deductions, Yéremyá's literary style has still in these later times much that is peculiar and even original, great wealth of new figures with great delicacy of descrip-

tion, a literary facility that readily adapts itself to the most different subjects combined with graphic transparency, and with all this an unadorned simplicity which is very unlike the greater artificiality of his contemporary Habaqqûq. Notwithstanding all this, his language already bears the most unmistakable marks of a declining and depressed age: it no longer possesses such a prompt and firm mastery of itself, the thoughts crumble under the hand of the speaker; an imposing arrangement and a clearly-cut conjunction of the sentences become rare, each thought occurs in a more disconnected and detached manner, is often drawn out to a great length, while it is multiform and not finely articulated like a living whole; and this greater disjointedness, this longer, slower movement becomes most perceptible when the larger sections, the separate wholes, of his works are examined. In certain passages it seems as if the author were dimly conscious of this defect, the style becoming suddenly unusually contracted, compressed and terse: but this artificial terseness is not continued long. All this may be traced even into the finer veins of the language, as, *e.g.*, a noun to which some prominence is to be given is often first pointed to by its pronoun after the Aramaic manner, ix. 14; xi. 15; xxvii. 8; xxxiii. 5; xli. 3; xlvi. 44 (li. 56); comp. Ez. iii. 21; x. 3; xiv. 4, xvii. 17; xxxiv. 2; xli. 15; xlii. 14; xliv. 7;—a portion of a clause is at times repeated, ii. 19; iv. 18, or a word placed loosely in the earlier part of the sentence is more definitely taken up again by the *Vav consec*, iii. 9; iv. 1; vi. 19; x. 23; xliv. 25; on the other hand, we have at times with great abruptness and brevity the copula between two words, i. 15; xv. 7; xxi. 13; comp. Ez. vi. 11, comp. ver. 9; vii. 20; viii. 10; xxxviii. 17, 22; xlii. 13; or the preposition, or the negative, of a second member is left out, iii. 19-23; v. 28. Further, certain figures, sentences and thoughts have become such favourites with the prophet that he is never weary of repeating them in the same manner, which becomes at last the result of an increasing poverty of invention.



But the most noteworthy thing in this respect is, that the earlier the discourses are their language is comparatively much richer and more instinct with life : between ii.-vi. and vii.-xxiv., and then again between the latter chapters and xlii.-xliv., there is a perceptible difference (although all these pieces as denunciations of Israel deal with the same subject), and unhappily we observe in the decrease of the beauty, wealth, and originality of the language the growing decline of those times and the more and more disconsolate form of the circumstances of this prophet.

But the decay of the entire period penetrates more deeply than his language: it enters into the inmost feelings and views of that prophet who laboured longest and with deepest sympathy with his age, feeling most painfully in his tender heart all its incurable deficiencies. For the state of the kingdom and the community was during the whole of his labours such that a long time there remained no hope at all of true amendment, and everything hastened with rapid strides towards a general irremediable dissolution; even the attempted reforms, not excepting the best and noblest of them which Yosia risked, were productive of the very opposite of what was intended, and long before the final spasmodic convulsion of the state, Yéremyá had perceived that a true conversion was no longer possible, iii. 1, 10; v. 2; xiii. 23; if under Yosia a serious reform was at least attempted by the authorities, everything after his death only hastened the more irresistibly to absolute ruin. Yosia's successors, hardly pressed by external enemies, either misled or impeded by the boundless arbitrariness of their magnates at home; the prophets as a body degenerate equally with the priests and sunk to mere instruments of the arbitrariness of the magnates, the new dangers of the rising scholastic wisdom appearing at the same time; the mass of the people misled by the hosts of flattering prophets who in the midst of the evident decline of all public concerns continued to talk of near deliverance and great happiness, but would neither see nor

properly heal the real diseases of the nation (iv. 10; v. 12, 13, 31; vi. 14; xiv. 13-16; xx. 6; xxvii.-xxix.); from without the devastating attacks of the Scythians, the Egyptians, and the Chaldeans, with the lasting conquests of the latter, from within growing confusion, on the one hand, presumption and defiance, on the other, unreasonable fear and disgraceful distrust of the best people (a kind of secret police, xx. 1; xxix. 26; xxxvii. 13 sq.); in addition to all this, a populace which continued to listen willingly enough to the words and counsels of the prophets, but at the same time fancied it was sufficiently educated, discerning, and strong to reject wantonly even the most prudent counsels of the best prophets, indeed, to ridicule and mortally hate the genuine prophet just because of his purity (xi. 18, 19; xv. 15; xvii. 15-18; xviii. 18, 23; xx.; xxvi.-xxix.; xxxvi.-xliv:—against all these dangers and hindrances, which had never before been so terribly abundant, this prophet must contend with the weapon of the word of Yahvé alone, contend against them all through the course of a long life, contend in a field that constantly grows more unfavourable and more unthankful, amidst ever greater interruptions which he in vain opposed, and this as it appears without any result or fruit, since he only too clearly sees that for the present all is lost, and is unable, even at short intervals, to seize such passing hopes as the probably much younger prophet, Habaqqûq, or another of his contemporaries, the anonymous author of “Zech.” xii. 1—xiii. 6; xiv. Certainly there is here revealed the profoundest suffering that could try a prophet of the Old Testament; we know nothing similar in the history of the prophets, for though Hoséa had great likeness to Yéremyá, the prophets of the declining Northern kingdom were always able to look with some hope to Yuda, whilst in Yéremyá’s days the last remnant of the ancient community appeared to be disappearing without any hope. It is true, Yéremyá, amidst all his distresses, never loses for long all higher assurance, in the end feels that he is strengthened

and sustained by Yahvé in his conflict against them, for his entire life attests most plainly what he says in this respect at the very opening of his book, i. 17-19. And if he, the prophet of such a tender heart, of such purity and innocence of mind, who was only too sincere, too affectionate, and too sympathetic towards his age, at certain moments sinks into deep despondency and bitter indignation at such a want of appreciation and such constant persecution of the prophetic spirit, if here and there he does not even restrain an execration of the impious conduct of his mortal enemies, and after all that he has experienced gives free course at least in his books to such outpourings of his heart (xi. 18-xii. 3; xv. 10, 11, 15-21; xvii. 9-18; xviii. 18-23; xx. 7-18), who will feel that that is not pardonably human? especially since he always leaves it to Yahvé alone to execute the vengeance, even when he calls for it, and never remains finally in his despondency, but composes and strengthens himself again in Yahvé at last, indeed, concludes with a joyful song of praise, xx. 13. At the same time, such a subjection to the mere feelings of the heart cannot be justified when brought before the prophetic tribunal, not even when it occurs in books only: the earlier prophets are free of it, for Hosea even does not suffer himself to be carried away so far by his sorrow. We must therefore recognize here, after all, the fact that prophecy did not continue thoroughly strong and manful enough wholly to withstand the severe trials of the age, but suffered itself to be carried away, even in its noblest and mightiest instruments, by the rent and hopeless condition of this age. In thus forcing into its whirl the final noble remnant of prophetism, it is true the age destroyed its own best hope and succour, but we must acknowledge that prophetism on its part, just when it cast off the last of its earlier fetters, had no longer original power enough to control and to guide the age as had last been the case under Yesaya. And here also the progress of the decline is rapid: whilst in the products of the earlier period of Yéremyá's life,

ii.-x., no sign has yet appeared of such despondency, they multiply more and more, xi.-xx., and predominate, xxxvii.-xliv.

Finally, the entire outward history of Yéremyá's life, as far as we have any certain records of it, shows the same mournful progress. When he at first appeared publicly, the kingdom was still strong and powerful under Yosia, suffering only from the consequences of the cruel reign of Manasseh, ii. 30 ; xv. 4, and from a foolish preference for Egyptian manners and religions as a new evil to be added to the old ones, ii. But it was not long before the Scythians must have come into the country, whose inroads inflicted great devastation, although they did not continue long. These inroads were the occasion of detailed exhortations and threatening addresses on the part of our prophet as also on the part of Ssephanya, iii.-vi., for by the enemy from the *North*, whose wonderful appearance is graphically described, iv. 5-7, 13, 15-17, 29 ; v. 6, 15-17 ; vi. 1-5, 22, 23, 25, the Chaldeans, who subsequently drove the Egyptians out of Palestine, cannot be intended, although Deut. xxviii. 49, sq. was before the prophet's mind in his description, but the precursors of the Chaldeans, the Scythians.\* —There follow then the times of the internal reforms of the King Yosia, from which no oracles have been preserved. But soon after the fall of this king, at the beginning of the reign of Yoyaqîm, when the Egyptians had subjugated the land, but the remains of the Scythians again formed by the aid of the new Chaldean power a threatening danger in the distance, and at home the old vices were again in the ascendant, Yere-myá's utterances became for the first time decidedly mournful: he speaks not only against the new wisdom of the schools, he also complains aloud before the people assembled in the temple, that the prophetic voice, however often it had been

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\* Comp. *supra* pp. 14, 27, further especially Jer. vi. 3-5 with Ps. lix., and the remarks *infra* on Ez. xxxviii., xxxix.



lifted up, had never been attended to, as if he had already made this painful discovery fully enough in his own prophetic experience, vii.-x., xxvi., xxxv. And when in the fourth year of Yoyaqím the Chaldeans advanced southwards, the Egyptian supremacy in Asia rapidly melted away, and great world-storms were threatening close at hand, and Yéremyá therefore considered it on his part a duty at this critical moment to collect into a book all his previous disregarded admonitions and threatenings, and have them read in the temple, he had then to see his book destroyed by this king, and himself persecuted merely because of the truth which it contained, xxv., xxxvi. From that time everything grew still darker and more uncertain for this prophet, who though unwearied and unsubdued, was incessantly persecuted by men of all classes and everywhere threatened with deadly hatred: we have no very detailed accounts of the many mortal dangers with which he had constantly to contend, but a few brief indications show sufficiently what severe trials he passed through, and how he was not sure of life at any moment, xi. 18-20; xv. 10, 11, 15; xviii. 18; xx. 1, 2, 7-9; xxix. 26, 27. It is true, his reputation rose continually in Jerusalem, notwithstanding all these persecutions, as is remarked above: but since, even in spite of the open revolt of the people against the existing Chaldean rule, he would never give way to the passions of the moment, but constantly exhorted the people to remain quiet, because he foresaw that all these perverse attempts against the new and strong Chaldean power could only increase the misfortune, he was first thrown into a more endurable and then into a dangerous prison by the hatred of the majority of the magnates, and would have perished had not one of them taken pity upon him just before it was too late, xxxvii-xxxix. He remained in prison until the taking of the city, and was then, like all the others who were intended for banishment, at first led away in chains, in fact, had been already carried off as far as Rama, on the northern frontier of Yuda, xl. 1, when he was liberated by

the Chaldean magnate who was in charge, and who had by that time probably been made acquainted with the previous conduct of the prophet, and having been liberated, he attached himself to the remnant of his fellow-countrymen who were left in the land. But even then neither the imprudence and wickedness which had become so deeply rooted ceased amongst this remnant, nor the persecution to rage against the aged prophet: and violently dragged by them into Egypt, he had there also to contend with the incorrigible blindness of this wholly perverse generation, xl.—xliv. Thus we see his external life only growing more and more calamitous and hopeless, a faithful illustration of the irresistible and deep fall of all the concerns of Israel in those forty or fifty years, and the exact opposite of what history tells us of the life and successes of Yesaya and we have brought out in detail in Vol. II.

3. Yéremyá represents, therefore, in this his twofold character most clearly and completely the great turning point of the entire phenomenon of Old Testament prophecy, when just as it has become clearly and firmly conscious of its nature and limitations, it still begins at that moment to forfeit some of its inward power and its outward influence, and thereby advances irretrievably towards its dissolution. Yéremyá is so far as he himself is concerned equal to any prophet from the earlier and noblest prophetic age, both in point of aim and activity, indeed, he it is who first represents the true dignity and inward glory of prophecy, that glory which must attest itself most fully, no less in self-restriction and suffering, than in energy of deed: and therein lie the real greatness and the true characteristics of this prophet, that with respect to which no one else can be considered his superior or his equal. But whilst he had to appear to complete what had been wanting in all previous prophecy, his age has already become an entirely unprophetic age, which, educated by this long-standing institution of prophecy and exalted by it, now deems itself to have entirely outgrown it, and is henceforth very unwilling to listen

seriously to its voice : this by its reaction cripples the power of prophecy, and produces, notwithstanding all its efforts, weakness and decay, to the extent to which previous prophecy had really created so much of the highest and most lasting character. When prophecy had so far advanced that it cast off the last traces of that antique violence which it still showed in the case of Yesaya, by this very change both its outward form was essentially altered and its previous power and activity were reduced : it was insensibly and without its own intention compelled, on the one hand, more and more to take the form of simple teaching and proof, on the other, to give expression to personal and subjective feelings, and this is precisely the transition which with a little attention may already be discovered in Yéremyá. We have already mentioned the utterance of the feelings of the heart, at first intruding upon and then overwhelming the more strictly prophetic discourse ; the intrusion of didactic matter and the didactic inclination may be seen in the long description of idolatry x. 1-16, where the prophetic form is scarcely externally observed, and again in the wholly detached lesson concerning the sabbath, xvii. 19-27, etc. In this respect, therefore, Yéremyá, the last great prophet, the evening star of the declining day of prophecy, occupies the dividing line between two ages, and without intending it closes the species of entirely pure prophecy. And the tragical feature which before everything distinguishes him does not arise from the unhappy fate of the kingdom and the sacred city which also fell upon him, but from the bitter feeling which possessed him, that the entire institution of ancient prophecy was approaching its end, a fact which he had to experience in his own person as no other prophet had done. It is true, if the times had been quieter and brighter, prophecy would of itself have gradually passed into the form of simple teaching ; we see it however, for a time once more greatly moved by the violent commotion and overthrow of the interests of Israel, but it really puts forth to the utmost its final energies,

only the more rapidly to decay and sink into the common ruin with the whole nationality and national institutions of the ancient people.

But it is just here that we behold another of the greatest excellencies of this prophet. For precisely because he sees everything around irretrievably giving way, and does not anticipate, but feels and experiences in his own person the end of the previous powers of the kingdom of Yahvé, including those of the prophetic office, he discovers, inasmuch as he cannot as a true prophet give up in his brighter moments the eternal hope, the truth surmised by none before him, that the entire ancient covenant of men with Yahvé no longer suffices, and in future a new one must be concluded, the articles of which have been written in the heart itself. This is still no habitual idea of the prophet's, it is no more than an occasional glimpse; and when it is caught sight of, it is only rapidly sketched, not described in detail. This is in fact the most characteristic as well as the most productive in results of Yéremyá's thoughts; after he has come into its possession, he conceives the Messianic truth with much greater definiteness than previously, and just at the moment when the ancient prophetism is clearly sensible of its own dissolution, he opens the brightest prospect into the darkly veiled future, xxxi. 31-34; xxxii. 39, 40; comp. iii. 16, 17; as early as Hezeqiel this is more weakly repeated in his way, xi. 19, 20; xxxvi. 25-28, comp. 18, 31.

II. We are still able to discover with great completeness how the whole book of Yéremyá arose, and of what sections and pieces it was originally composed, inasmuch as it has been preserved very much as the prophet wrote it, or rather dictated it to his constant attendant Barukh (xxxvi., xlv., xliii. 3).

It may be seen at once from certain general indications that the book must have been preserved pretty much as it left the hands of the prophet. If we examine, *e.g.*, the whole of the headings scattered through the book, having previously obtained an



accurate knowledge of the meaning of all its smaller or larger pieces, we shall be surprised by a similarity and a symmetry, notwithstanding a great amount of dissimilarity, which necessarily point to an arrangement of the whole book by one hand. Each piece that is complete in itself has the heading, *הדבר אשר היה אל ירמיהו מאת יהוה*, vii. 1; x. 1; \* xviii. 1; xxi. 1; xxv. 1; \* xxx. 1; xxxii. 1; xxxiv. 1, 8; xxxv. 1; xl. 1; xlv. 1, or in a less rigid and briefer form, acc. § 334 *a*, *אשר היה דבר יהוה אל ירמיהו* xiv. 1; xlv. 1: xlvii. 1; xlix. 34, also with another slight change, xlv. 1, merely for the sake of brevity, xxix. 1, on account of the exceptional nature of the matter (for it is a letter), xlv. 13 is more remarkable; this heading is shortened, except xxiii. 9, merely in the case of most of the numerous continuous pieces concerning foreign nations, because they are connected (xlv. 1) together by a more general heading, xlv. 2; xlviii. 1; xlix. 1, 7, 23, 28; but it is lengthened naturally in the general heading to the whole book, i. 1-3. Occasionally a brief notification of the time or the occasion is appended, xiv. 1; xxv. 1; xlvii. 1, elsewhere only in pieces of a more historical character, xxvi. 1; xxvii. 1; xxxiv. 1, 8; xxxv. 1; in almost purely historical pieces the opening also is purely historical, xxxvi. 1; xxxvii. 1. Only two pieces, ii. 1; iii. 1, have headings forming exceptions from this general designation. They will be dealt with below. To a certain extent xviii. 1 is also exceptional, and will also be subsequently considered. In the case of the introductory piece, i. 4-17, the general heading serves also for the piece.

If the oracles concerning foreign nations, xlv.-xlix., are reckoned only as one great piece, there will according to these headings be twenty-three sections or distinct pieces in the entire book; and it is of the greatest importance that the most careful examination of every separate word ends in the same result, that the books contain neither more nor fewer

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\* In these passages the phrase is varied.—*Tr.*

than these twenty-three distinct and separable pieces. If these pieces are then separately examined further, it appears that all the longer ones in which the historical character is not predominant, fall into strophes, and, acc. Vol. I., p. 74, in Yéremyá the long strophe with 7-8-9 verses is decidedly the prevailing one, longer ones occurring at times, especially in the case of long enumerations like those of ch. xxv., shorter ones only at the end of a longer whole. This form of the strophe pervades the entire book as the only one habitual to this prophet, the concluding piece xxxiii. 19-26, and the smaller pieces composed of oracles against foreign nations, xlv.-xlix., alone falling into shorter strophes. And if the strophe is often no longer so beautifully rounded and perfect in itself as in the earlier prophets, the cause lies in the general decline of artistic power which is observable in this prophet. The strophe, as such, has no distinctive external sign expressed in words in Yéremyá any more than in the other prophets or poets, it being probably distinguished in the original manuscript only by breaks and spaces. Again, several strophes often form a distinct whole; and even the pieces with a decidedly historical character can be easily divided into sections; indeed, there is often a marked pause in the middle of a strophe. The manner by which a larger pause, or a section, of a piece is indicated is very various and often there is no indication of it at all. Where an indication is supplied, it is never of that larger and more formal character which may be justly termed a heading, but it is rather a mere formula of transition, very brief and fitting into the discourse without breaking it, thus *וַיְהִי דְבַר יְהוָה*, or shorter still, *וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה*, in addition to which formula there is also *אֵלַי* to me as far as ch. xxiv. of the Hebrew text, i. 4, 11; iii. 6, 11; xi. 6, 9; xiii. 8; xiv. 11 (xv. 1); xvi. 1; xviii. 5; xxiv. 4; but from that point, *אֶל יִרְמְיָהוּ* to Yéremyá xxix. 30; xxxii. 26; xxxiii. 19, 23; xxxv. 12; xxxvii. 6; xlii. 7; xliii. 8, comp. xxxix. 15; there is also added with probably greater definiteness, *שְׁנִית*,

once more, i. 13; xiii. 3; xxxiii. 1. But much more frequently the prophetic formula is כה אמר יהוה, *thus saith Yahvé*, which Yéremyá uses after every pause that will permit it, his frequently flagging discourse inclining to such rests: the formula then frequently serves as a re-connecting link even in the middle of a strophe, but sometimes, when it is not necessary that the discourse should flow on without a break, it is found at the commencement of a section, as xiii. 1; xvii. 19; xix. 1; xxii. 1.—All these ways of introducing larger or smaller portions of books and sections are so regularly used and are in themselves so reasonable that the two or three exceptions signify nothing, and must be explained in some other way. There are but the three exceptional cases, ii. 1; iii. 1 (6), which will be explained below, and xvii. 19, which must have changed places with xviii. 1. Nor must all this be considered unimportant: whoever is acquainted with Semitic literatures knows that in times when the parts, members, and sections of a book were not yet accurately counted, the thread of the books is retained and plainly continued to the end in the form and regularity of the headings and transitions.

If we now go on to compare the plan of the separate pieces and thus get to the heart of the independent sections of the book, we discover in this respect also a remarkable uniformity and regularity which could only come from the mind and hand of the author himself. When, for instance, the purely prophetic discourse does not prevail and the entire piece perhaps is not composed of it with short historical notes, but special prophetic visions and signs of the truth to be explained are also intended to be described, these visions and signs are never placed at the commencement but always subsequently, as if Yéremyá himself were altogether unable to think of them as anything more than the elucidations which had to follow the truth; whilst in actual life the reverse order had to be observed, the people needing to see such a striking picture of the truth before they would attend to the truth itself. This will

be more evident when we come to explain the book in detail. This habit of the prophet is so constantly observed that it appears with the same regularity in the portions of the book that were written last, xliii. 8-13; xliv. 29, 30.

Or if we look at the kind of writing, we find that at first from ch. ii. to ch. x (ch. i. naturally does not in this respect come into consideration) the pure prophetic discourse prevails in a surprisingly progressive manner, from ch. xi. to ch. xxv. here and there a short historical observation is interspersed, but from ch. xxvi., and again from ch. xxxiv., the historical style completely predominates; we also find that all that is narrated briefly or more at length and bears evidence that it is a genuine portion of the work, concerns simply the fortunes of this prophet himself. And though there is much that is unexpected at the first glance, there are still so many evidences of arrangement and uniformity, that we are at the very outset disposed to conclude that the hand of the prophet has been at work throughout the main portion of the whole book.

Advancing from such preliminary observations to the heart of the matter, when we follow up all the evidences and indications that are anywhere discernible, the following view of the origin of the present book, as far as the prophet himself was actively concerned in it, is obtained:

1. As early as Yosia's reign, according to all available indications, Yéremyá first published a book. For the long piece, iii.-vi., manifestly owed its origin to the inroads of the Scythians, it has too plainly and too immediately proceeded from the most recent impressions of the strange time to have been written in much later times, and in respect of arrangement and art, it is evidently the oldest piece by which this prophet established his fame as a prophetic writer. Just as it shares with the small book of Ssephanya (see *supra*, p. 14) the occasion of its production, it may also have been published about the same time, or not much later. But when the prophet published it, he placed before it, in ch. ii., a small piece



which immortalised the most important thoughts of the time of his very earliest labours.

2. It was not before the fourth year of Yoyaqîm, after Yéremya had therefore already laboured above twenty years as a prophet, that he composed a larger work, as ch. xxxvi. records in detail: and we have already indicated how much there was in the character of that time precisely to lead him to present the prophetic truths for once in a more general statement, therefore to collect not merely his earlier oral or written threats and exhortations, but also to commit to writing concerning the foreign nations what had not been included in his oral discourses and also to present more general views and prospects with regard to the future which was then so threatening. It is true, as soon as it had been publicly read for the first time, it was forthwith destroyed by the king's command. But the short narrative, xxxvi. 32, indicates that it was shortly after restored by the prophet, and received further additions; these additions, however, inasmuch as nothing essential will have been omitted from the first edition, can only have been such as were occasioned by subsequent events and prophetic discourses, and were accordingly added in writing by degrees as new matter arose. According to all appearances, some important remains of the first edition have been preserved in the present book, namely, ch. vii.-x., ch. xlvi.-xlix. (besides xlvi. 13-28) especially, in addition to the remains copied from the previous book, ch. ii., ch. iii.-vi., as will be seen below. It is also scarcely to be doubted that this edition must have had pretty much the same general outline as the present book. At the same time, the book with numerous additions, to which the prophet refers, xxxvi. 32, appeared

3. according to all indications after the death of Yoyaqîm, at the beginning of the reign of the last king Ssedeqia, because such pieces as ch. xi.-xiii., xxii. 10—xxiii. xxv., xxxv., xxxvi., xlv. show by their whole tone and the freshness of the colouring that they belong to this period and can

hardly have been first composed at the time of the next edition which followed some ten years later. For

4. the present book, at least so far as its design and its main portion are concerned, was not written until after the destruction of the city and the banishment of the people, since in the heading, i. 1-3, its contents are described as extending to this time. The fifth month of the year of the destruction of the kingdom is named, and we see from xl. 1 sq. ; lii. 12, that in this month the unhappy affairs of Yuda were put in order by the Chaldean prince Nabuzaradan and the country quieted as much as possible after the city and temple had been destroyed a month before. Now, since Yéremyá remained quietly in the land until the seventh month, xli. 1, and was not carried off to Egypt until after that, we may suppose that it was exactly in these two months that he partly arranged and partly composed the present book. At all events, it is plain from xxxiv. 6 that he must have written it outside Jerusalem, and on the other hand there is no trace of its having been written later in Egypt. This period naturally invited to its production. Another of those great days in the history of the nation had come when a more extended review of the past and a glimpse into the veiled future seemed necessary ; indeed, the most decisive crisis of affairs which had been for centuries possible, had arrived. On the one hand, precisely those gloomy forebodings that Yéremyá had all along openly and boldly uttered, even under the most violent persecutions, had been completely fulfilled ; the impressive warnings of long years appeared as justified, and there was nothing impossible in his being the only one of his fellow-countrymen who as entirely untouched by the immediate guilt of the great calamity had survived the destruction of the kingdom. As a fact, it is observable in many parts of his book with what warmth he emphasises the circumstance that he had always and everywhere, before the king and the nation, exhorted to quietness towards the Chaldeans. The small piece xxxiv. 1-7 really owes its reception into

into the book only on this account, comp. xxi.; xxviii.-xxix. But on the other hand, no period demanded more consolation and helpful direction to the eternal hopes of the true community than did this, which had fallen into the abyss of profound despair, a despair which seemed to a certain extent entirely justified. These considerations must have urged this prophet to collect his numerous experiences, hopes, and warnings: and the outward peace which he at last found in these months after such severe suffering, could only have the effect of more strongly persuading him to such a resolve.

He arranged the large book upon a simple plan. It contains five parts, or, if the short introduction and the conclusion are not reckoned as equally important divisions, three large parts: this arrangement had manifestly already been supplied substantially in the previous book, since the new one received only a number of very important additions and further a fresh arrangement of the new whole. The five parts were as follows: I. The prophetic introduction with the long heading to the entire book, ch. i. II. Discourses threatening the punishment of Israel, which as in almost every prophetic work compose the chief subject matter, ch. ii.-xxiv. In this part we have seven pieces placed together: and although scarcely any notes of time are inserted, everything speaks in favour of the conclusion that these seven pieces are arranged as we find them in accordance with their chronology. For, in the first place, the chronological order is of itself the most natural, inasmuch as no other principle upon which they are arranged is discoverable; and, in the next place, in the case of most of them very clear indications lead so plainly to this principle of arrangement that the few doubtful cases may be safely enough determined by their similarity. It is true that in the arrangement of the matter of some of these seven pieces the subject also plays a part as a principle of arrangement, inasmuch as the prophet connects in a superficial order with the subject with which he has once started all that is similar which he remembers

from his public discourses: but still the seven public appearances, which as they were still preserved in the prophet's memory here form the foundation of the seven pieces, must according to many clear indications be actually historical, no mere imagination, and still less an invention of the author. In projecting each of these pieces it is evident that the prophet proceeded from the recollection of a discourse which he had delivered here or there and which was important either intrinsically or from its consequences: this recollection became to him the centre of the piece about to be written, to which he could also easily attach kindred matter. Briefly enumerated, they are as follows: (1) ii. belongs to the first year of Yéremyá's labours, because the commencement of the labours announced ch. i. must have been public; and as the piece begins ver. 2 with the divine charge to Yéremyá *to go* and to speak aloud these words, this indicates in this as in all similar cases, that he really once delivered such a discourse, because the words can have no other meaning and we see the opposite of this, *e.g.*, xxx. 1-4. (2) iii.-vi. falls according to iii. 6 in the reign of Yosia, and was without doubt like the former only repeated from the oldest book. (3) vii.-x. delivered after the beginning of Yoyaqîm's reign at the temple, comp. vii. 2 with xxvi. (4) xi.-xiii. according to internal indications from the brief reign of Yoyakhin, or Yekhonya, delivered according xi. 6, 18, 19 probably also at 'Anathôth. Both of these pieces from the previous edition. (5) xiv. 1—xvii. 18, occasioned by a drought as it is briefly termed xiv. 1: and although Yéremyá had already borrowed graphic figures from such a calamity, iii. 3; v. 24, 25; xii. 4, the frequency of its occurrence in Kanáan removes all difficulty from the supposition that this discourse, as its position enables us to conjecture, was not delivered before the commencement of Ssedeqia's reign; with which date the matter of the discourse also accords. (6) xvii. 19—xx. 18 without doubt also belonging to the reign of Ssedeqia, comp. xx. 1, 2 with xxix. 26, and having a general conclusion;



for (7) xxi.-xxiv. is of a somewhat different nature: though it starts from a discourse addressed to Ssedeqia himself during the last years of his reign, it connects therewith, taking a backward survey of his experience, entirely general observations concerning the leaders of the nation, kings and prophets. Since we do not find brief historical notes inserted before we come to the fourth of these seven pieces, that is tacit evidence that the serious persecutions and mortal dangers of Yéremyá's life, which he called to mind as he was preparing the whole book, had only a gradual beginning and could not be so distinctly recalled as having occurred during the first twenty years of his public life. Similarly, it is with the fourth piece that the figurative elucidations of truth begin, the more convenient method of proving a thing by signs becoming probably a habit with every prophet later in life than that by means of discourses: the former method presupposes that the prophet who uses it is already very generally acknowledged. Next follows III. a general review of all nations, the Heathen as well as Israel: and this was the suitable place for the collection of oracles concerning the Heathen nations, comp. Ez. xxv.-xxxii. It may be proved from many indications that the oracles concerning the Heathen ch. xli.-xlix. must have originally stood before ch. xxv., and that ch. xxv. closed this part as a second piece. There were here loosely subjoined three pieces of a more historical character, concerning the false prophets with whom Yéremyá had to contend: they prove historically what had been mentioned in ch. xxv., and for that reason find their place here; in general such pieces bear rather the character of *scholia*, elucidations in as compressed a form as possible, and certainly always written last. Towards the end IV. follow the two pieces, xxx.-xxxiii., devoted solely to the description of the hopes of the future; to which, as after III., three historical supplements, xxxiv.-xxxv. are added in a very similar way. That there is a large and complete section of the book before ch. xxx. appears also from the fact that this time the heading is

more extended and especially from the mention of a *book* in which the prophet is to write, xxx. 1-4. V. The conclusion ch. xxxvi. with ch. xlv. from the previous edition.

Such was originally the form and extent of the book as it was then written; and Hezeqiel's book is arranged upon a very similar plan.

If we now more seriously enquire whether Yéremyá at that time wrote down everything simply from his recollections of the previous forty years, or whether he retained much from his earlier writings unaltered, which, according to xxxvi. 32, is of itself a very probable supposition, we find on a closer comparison of all the above named pieces of this book with each other, that there is indeed a great likeness in expression, tone, and colouring pervading it, to such an extent, that we everywhere hear the same prophet; a conclusion which it would be almost superfluous to prove here in detail. A favourite phrase, of which he has very many (a sign that the originality and freshness of expression is already on the decline), may in accordance with the course of events receive a considerably altered signification: thus the expression *the enemy from the North*, which is not found in ch. ii., but is constantly repeated ch. iii.-vi. denotes, undoubtedly, the Scythians, and the Chaldeans are here nowhere mentioned, yet Yéremyá having once accustomed himself to speak of the powerful conquerors of that time as an evil coming from the North, he subsequently applies the same term when the Chaldeans are intended, especially as the remains of the Scythians had been absorbed into this nation, viii. 14-16; x. 22; xiii. 19-21; xxv. 9, 26; xlvii. 2; i. 13-15 (xlvi. 20, 24), comp. xv. 12; xvi. 15; xxiii. 8; xxxi. 8.—But notwithstanding this likeness an important difference will not escape a more searching glance. A few pieces, ch. ii., ch. iii.-vi. throughout, and more occasionally ch. xlv.-xlix. (always with the exception of xlv. 13-28) ch. xxv. (*ad fin.*) and ch. xxx., xxxi., are manifestly in a much more lively, fresh, original, rich and vigorous style than other pieces; one feels there the youth

and here the age of an author bowed down by profound sorrow, and in the same degree as the pieces written still later, ch. xxxvii.-xl., are much inferior in respect of poetic power and originality to those written immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem do these fall short of the fragments of the earliest discourses. This may be further observed in detail: the frequent repetitions, *e.g.*, into which Yéremyá falls, are met with after ch. vii. only; the constant enumeration of from two to four, but commonly three, divine instruments of chastisement (famine, sword, pestilence), but just commences in the earlier pieces in one example, v. 12, and becomes a true characteristic of the later ones only; on the other hand, the frequent reference to the Northern kingdom, which had by that time long disappeared, having its origin in the case of this prophet clearly in a learned imitation of the earlier prophets, is a distinctive mark of the older pieces, iii. 1—iv. 2; xxx. 2 sq. Neither is it probable that after forty years the prophet should have composed afresh such discourses as ch. ii., ch. iii.-vi, which describe the earlier period with such accuracy and circumstantial detail.

If the prophet thus received much from his earlier writings without alteration, and yet on the whole only fragments, not a few somewhat surprising phenomena are thereby explained. We comprehend the fact that nothing more than ch. ii.-vi. has been preserved from a period of almost twenty years of labour under Yosia: the majority of the older oracles might no longer appear so important. And with its transference from one book to another, the heading which must clearly have once stood before iii. 1, might easily be so mutilated on the one hand, and misplaced on the other, as we at present find it in ver. 1 and ver. 6: for the fact that no heading strictly speaking is found before ch. ii. is easy of explanation, since this piece in reality contains the first public discourse, and could therefore stand in the earlier book immediately after the main heading, although this piece is surprisingly short in comparison with the

others, ch. iii.-xxiv.: but a heading must necessarily have stood before ch. iii.

In brief, the main portion of the present book dates from a time subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem, including ch. i., which partially harmonizes with the style of the later pieces. And if the prophet did not write the main portion before this time, such general phrases are most easily explained as occur, xvii. 20 ; xix. 3 ; xxii. 4, where the *kings* of Yuda generally are addressed as if they appeared before the prophet's mind at the time when he was writing only as an indefinite class of persons, comp. i. 18.

5. It must have been a considerable space of time, at least some years, before Yéremyá can have written the remaining pieces and passages which are found in the present book as his latest additions and alterations: he had been carried off to Egypt, and the refugees there had already spread as far as the south of that country, and had taken up their settled residence in several of the cities of its northern, middle, and southern districts. The motives that induced him to make these additions and changes are evident as soon as we consider his customary procedure. The great events of the last years and months of the kingdom had now become sufficiently old to need to be afresh called to mind by the aid of the pen, whilst as far as they concerned the prophet himself, they were too new and well-known to be dwelt upon at length in the book which was written immediately after their occurrence. Moreover, the refugees who had fled into Egypt contrary to Yéremyá's prophetic determination, now began to repent of that step, xlv. 14, the correctness of his prophetic counsel being in this respect also thereby confirmed. Finally, there was the wish, very evident in ch. xlv., by a word spoken in his advanced age, as by a final legacy, to warn the people that had been thrown into Egypt against the contagious influences of a heathen belief. Accordingly, Yéremyá published by way of supplement the three pieces, xxxvii.-xlv., which more than



any earlier piece (with the very intelligible exception of ch. xxxvi.) bear a historical character ; for it is evident that ch. xxxvii.-xxxix. could not have been written earlier, not only their position showing that they have no place in the plan of the larger book, but their subject matter showing that they could not have been written at the same time as the earlier pieces, especially ch. xxi., see, for instance, the contradiction between xxi. 1 and xxxvii. 3. At the same time, it is intelligible enough that he should insert them in this place before the concluding piece of the larger book, ch. xlv. Further, the second piece concerning Egypt, xlvi. 13-26, must have been inserted at the same time ; and, inasmuch as the earliest discourse, ch. ii. of Yéremyá's had been remarkably enough directed against Egypt, he might well consider it appropriate at this time to re-write one of its strophes, adding a few new thoughts adapted to this period, vv. 10-19.

III. Thus far we are able to trace Yéremyá's own hand : and we do not hesitate to assert that all the above pieces are the genuine products of Yéremyá's pen, which may be easily further substantiated, *e. g.*, from the language.

However, this book of Yéremyá's must very early have been greatly valued and much read, and therefore, like any other much read book, have been considerably altered to suit later opinion. While the mournful forebodings of Yéremyá had been so completely fulfilled, and the wholly melancholy and distracted condition of later generations might find in the sadness of the last great prophet the spirit which best accorded with its own, at the same time, a much read favourite book is most subject to various alterations, especially as long as it has not obtained the character of a sacred and inviolable object.

1. At the end of the Babylonian captivity, and after several of those fly-leaves mentioned, Vol. I. p. 90, had been published, a successor of the prophets, who no longer ventured to write in his own name, undertook to make an alteration in the book, an alteration small in extent but important as regards its

meaning. If we examine the purpose he had in view, which appears plainly from his work, we find that the following considerations guided his hand. At a time when many who had been in exile at Babylon hesitated from worldly motives to make use of the freedom offered to them, and to return to their own country, probably at the same time appealing to Yéremyá, who had exhorted all exiles to quietly serve the Chaldeans, this anonymous prophet may have deemed it wise seriously to exhort them precisely in the name of Yéremyá to return home, and to address them in such a way as he would undoubtedly have done had he been living in these entirely changed circumstances. Accordingly he wrote an oracle against Babylon as a completely ruined kingdom, after the manner and complexion of Yéremyá's oracles, but with the great difference that many words which he repeated from Yéremyá received under his hand an entirely different reference, the name and the description of the *northern* enemies, *e.g.*, by whom Yéremyá had understood at first the Scythians and then the Chaldeans, being now applied to the Medes and Persians contending against the Chaldeans. Of course, Yéremyá could not speak of the Chaldeans as this anonymous prophet does: in his time they were a courageous, ambitious nation, having before them a no mean future under a vigorous young hero-king, and in accordance with his customary good sense he exhorts his contemporaries to submit to them, ascribes to Nabukodrossor the honourable title of *servant* of Yahvé, the one man to whom power had been given from Yahvé to chastise the nations, and though he proclaims, when it is necessary, to the Chaldeans also their overthrow, it is in quite another manner than to the other nations, only incidentally and as in the dim distance, with regard to which nothing further can be said, ch. xxv. The anonymous prophet could imagine and write nothing but the precise opposite of all this concerning the Chaldeans.

This long piece concerning Babylon the anonymous prophet placed under Yéremyá's name at the end of the oracles of

Yéremyá against foreign nations, at a place therefore where it seemed most likely to become attached to Yéremyá's book, ch. l.-li. But here arose a new difficulty. For Yéremyá had enumerated, xxv. 18-26, all the nations whom the approaching judgment should befall, and the Chaldeans were not amongst them, in the strict sense could not be amongst them, because Yéremyá looked upon them as precisely the divine instruments to execute the approaching punishment. In order nevertheless to enumerate the Chaldeans in the series of nations to be punished, and so to connect his piece against Babylon more closely with Yéremyá's book, the anonymous prophet introduced a few new sentences into ch. xxv., which can be clearly recognized and separated by their complexion merely.

2. This alteration of the book is therefore observable at a comparatively early period. At that time the pieces against foreign nations, ch. xlvi.-xlix, without doubt still retained their original place before ch. xxv. This supposition most easily explains how the anonymous prophet found it necessary to alter somewhat ch. xxv., which immediately followed. But the next change which the book underwent is the transference of the pieces against foreign nations to the end of the book, where they stand in the present Hebrew text, increased by the addition of that concerning Babylon, as ch. xlvi.-li. That this was not their original position is evident from the plan and the words of the larger book; and although we have no special witness to inform us why the author of the transference made it, we are still quite well able to understand that the same younger prophet who desired to add the new piece concerning Babylon to the end of the book, preferred in the new edition which he prepared to place the other pieces concerning foreign nations also at the end. A few other minor changes date back into early times, according to all appearances, since they are also found in the LXX. xv. 10, 11, xx. 14 sq., and the two headings above mentioned, xvii. 19, xviii. 1. The words, xlvi. 27, 28, are also copied at an unsuitable place.

The further addition of ch. lii. cannot have been made before ch. l. li. had found its present position. This chapter is an extract from the Imperial Records concerning the last fortunes of the city and the nation, agreeing for the most part with 2 Kings xxiv. 18 sq. For it is certain that the sentence, *Thus far the words of Yéremyá*, li. 64, were only then added, in order to mark ch. lii. expressly as an addition which had not originated from Yéremyá, comp. Job xxxi. 40; Ps. lxxii. 20; a similar dividing sentence, xlvi. 47, was more probably by Yéremyá himself.

A few other historical additions that are more closely interwoven with the text, were added, according to all appearance, earlier than ch. lii., namely, xxviii. 1, the second note of time, and xxxix. 1, 2, vv. 4-13, which two pieces, taken from the Imperial Records, would hardly have been added if the commentator had already found ch. lii. as an appendix: for this appendix is from the same source.

3. The Greek translator of the Septuagint must have found all these additions by later hands at least in one or more manuscripts, whilst they appear not to have all of them made their way into others: for one may allow that he compared several manuscripts. The most noteworthy alteration which either this translator or a manuscript used by him considered allowable, concerns the position of the pieces upon the foreign nations, including ch. l. li., which were probably already found at the end of the book in all Palestinian and Eastern, though probably not in all Egyptian, manuscripts. At a time when ch. xlvi.-li. stood sometimes at the end, sometimes in the middle of the book, a reader might be betrayed by ver. 13, ch. xxv., although it was itself an interpolation, to look upon the words אשר נבא ירמיהו על כל הגוים *which Yéremyá prophesied concerning all the Heathen*, as a heading of the section upon foreign nations, and accordingly to place the entire section here. But not only would ch. xxv. be thus divided contrary to its entire meaning into two widely separate portions, but ver. 14



would also have to be cancelled, although, as may be easily shown, it has a genuine Yéremyánic ring, and rounds off the strophe admirably. Moreover, as the passion to make alteration often grows by indulgence, this transposer also brought the various pieces against foreign nations into a different order, which is only too evidently capricious: the fact that according to this order the piece against Babylon is placed first, simply because it appeared to later readers as the most important, like the piece "Isa." xiii. 1—xiv. 23, which is similar both as regards origin and position, of itself shows how arbitrary this transposition is.

There is a number of smaller differences between the LXX. and the present Massôretic text which are sufficient proof of the differences in the manuscripts of this book that must have existed when the Greek translation was made. Not infrequently the original reading has been preserved in the LXX. One chief cause of the differences in the manuscripts, as in the case of similar popular books, is to be found in the language, which is in the stage of decay, with little compression and firmness. But in very many, one may say, in most, passages, the translator has manifestly sometimes read and translated with too great rapidity, and sometimes capriciously abbreviated the text. If he omits, *e.g.*, x. 6-9, this omission disturbs the entire structure of the strophes. Who would ever conclude from this that Yéremyá had not written x. 1-16 at all, with these exceedingly remarkable utterances regarding Heathenism? In fact, such comparisons of the religions of Israel and the Heathen, and more earnest warnings against the latter which now commence, accord well with a time when the temple had been already destroyed, and the people were exposed to the great danger of complete intermixture with the Heathen. Or whoever considers the passage, xxxiii. 14-26, as not written by Yéremyá simply because the LXX. omit it, and at the same time urges in proof of its being interpolated, that Yéremyá does not elsewhere speak of the restoration of the Levites as is done vv. 18

sq., he forgets that this passage suits the context perfectly, that the purely spiritual hopes of such passages as xxxi. 31-34, are not in the mind of the prophet set aside, and that the completion of the destruction of the temple might of itself kindle such desires even in the breasts of those who at other times did not care to speak much about the Levites; to say nothing of Ez. ch. xl.-xlviii. The true problem of biblical science is to distinguish the passages where the LXX. had really an older and better reading from those where the translator had before him a less original one, or the copyist of the LXX. simply blundered. The only security against being deceived by the similarity of the two cases is, having previously discovered the true mind and the genuine characteristics of this prophet.

Finally, when in the Hebrew text Yéremyá is spoken of, from ch. xxiv. in the third in the headings, and elsewhere in the first person, on the other hand, from ch. xxvi. always in the third (the LXX. has the first only xxxii. 26; xxxv. 12), this peculiarity may have originated with the first copyist of the book, inasmuch as from ch. xxvi. the historical style is more predominant. But when quite exceptionally the proper names of men ending in יהי receive the abbreviated form יה from ch. xxvi. to about the middle of ch. xxix., this peculiarity must have originated with a later copyist living more than a century after Yéremyá, who, however, did not carry on the innovation, but soon left it off again. In a similar way the orthography נבוכדנאצר found its way into ch. xxvi.-xxxiv. instead of the earlier נבוכדר (which is still found, ch. l. li.). We discover in these facts only the hands of various copyists from about the 5th cent. B.C., an age when a similar variety of hands is observable in the Psalter, comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes*, I a, 244 sq.\*

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\* In the former edition I considered it superfluous to say expressly that *Movers'* work on the differences between the LXX. and the Hebrew text of Yéremyá (1837), proceeded for the most part from wrong principles. I should then have been sorry to think it possible that the actual differences between the present book of Yéremyá and its oldest form, would have since that time been again so seriously misunderstood.

i.

1

Words of Yéremyá the son of Chilqia, one of the priests in 'Anathôth in the land of Benjamin: to whom Yahvé's word came in the days of Yosia son of Amôn king of Yuda, in the thirteenth year of his reign: and further came in the days of Yoyakîm, son of Yosia king of Yuda until the eleventh year of Ssedeqia son of Yosia king of Yuda was completed, until Jerusalem was depopulated in the fifth month.

The somewhat general expression, i. 3, "until the 11th year was completed," is immediately limited by the more definite mention of the 5th month of this year. Comp. *History of Israel*, iv. 273 sq. (III. 806 sq.)

# I.—THE INTRODUCTION.

## Ch. i. 4-19.

In the introduction Yéremyá describes, after the model of Isa. ch. vi., the sacred moment of his prophetic initiation, as he calls it to mind after the experiences of his past labours. In the light of this reminiscence the piece assumes the form of a more general review of the highest thoughts and views in the power of which the prophet lived and spoke, which therefore often recur more distinctly in the various pieces of the following book. But they could not thus have lived before his mind through his entire career, unless they had obtained firm root in his heart from that first moment. Nothing is more characteristic of this prophet than a certain tenderness of soul, which might manifest itself at the commencement of his prophetic mission, particularly as he was very young, vv. 6, 7, as timidity; and his history is characterized by extraordinary menaces and persecutions at the hands of men of all classes, inasmuch as he as a sincere, true prophet, was compelled to proclaim almost nothing but mournful tidings in an age which was rapidly hastening to destruction. And however much calamity overtook the Davidic kingdom at that time, the disaster which threatened in the form of wild floods of nations from the North

(pp. 70, 84), was during almost the whole of Yéremyá's long public life the greatest, and at last, when his book was published with its heading i. 1-3, this disaster had already caused the destruction of Jerusalem. But amidst all these persecutions and sufferings Yéremyá had always felt that he had been strengthened and saved by Him who had from the commencement of his call opened his timid mouth, and then confirmed the truth of his mournful forebodings by the general result. This is accordingly the leading thought of the introduction. After the prophet has narrated that while still very young he was strengthened and consecrated to become a prophet, and a prophet not to Jerusalem alone (ch. ii.-xxiv.), but also over many nations and kingdoms (ch. xlvi. sq.), vv. 5-10, he presents the substance of some of the main thoughts which he has had to proclaim, and which will be dealt with in the following pieces: this is done by means of two expressive symbols, vv. 11-16, which may at the same time serve to show that God called up before his mind immediately genuine prophetic symbols. At the end, vv. 17-19, he returns to the chief thought of the introduction.—As Yéremyá, acc. p. 77, is accustomed to elucidate by symbols the matter which he has previously treated in his discourses, so in this case the symbols follow the thought. According to this plan and the general matter of the piece, it may date very well from the second and third edition of the book, but in any case must have been enlarged with the fourth edition.

## 1.

- 5      And Yahvé's word came unto me in this wise: Before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee, and before thou camest from the belly sanctified thee, | appointed thee a prophet to the nations! || Then said I "Ah Lord Yahvé! indeed I know not how to speak, for I am too young!" || but Yahvé said unto me: say not "I am too young:" | but to whomsoever I send thee thou wilt go, and whatsoever I commission thee thou wilt speak; || fear not before them! | for I am with



thee to deliver thee, saith Yahvé." || And Yahvé put forth his hand and touched my mouth; and Yahvé said to me: look I  
 10 put my words in thy mouth! || see I set thee just now over the nations and over the kingdoms, | to pluck up and pull up, to ruin and to destroy, and to build and to plant! ||

## 2.

And Yahvé's word came to me in this wise: "What seest thou, Yéremyá?" I said, "I see an *evergreen tree*,"\* || and

1. Vv. 4-10. A man's conviction of his mission is then true when he feels in his inmost soul that he has not chosen a vocation arbitrarily and from his own passionate or idle liking, but knows that he has within him a power for the vocation which coincides with the pure divine power itself, which existed therefore in secret before the temporal commencement of the call, and may outlast all temporal vicissitudes. If this holds of every higher human vocation, it is true in an especial sense of the prophetic vocation, inasmuch as it requires the purest spiritual power. The moment, therefore, when the surmise first flashed through Yéremyá's soul that the prophetic mission was his divine destination, that Yahvé therefore had recognized him as *his* servant, and consecrated him to be a prophet, yea, to be precisely *the* prophet that he became, a prophet over many nations (vv. 9, 10) from the first, accordingly, before his birth (for where could the limit be fixed in tracing such a destination upwards?),—this moment, although only a subjective act, was in reality the temporal commencement of his entire later acti-

vity, ver. 5. And although as he was then only very young he could not repress at first a certain human hesitancy, he immediately felt again the divine strengthening for his prophetic labours, vv. 6, 7, indeed, he felt his mouth consecrated and inspired as by Yahvé's hand itself, to speak from this moment as a divine watchman and messenger over all nations of the earth, with power to destroy and to build, vv. 9, 10 (after Isa. vi. 7-10): for what such a true prophet speaks is never in vain and without result, his cheering and strengthening word builds up, his wrathful and correcting word destroys, comp. v. 14; xxiii. 29; this is his power as regards the outward world, which the world also well knows: yet in those times of internal corruption his word necessarily primarily destroyed more than it built up, contrary to his own personal desires; for the time had not yet come for building up. The largest part of his book shows how his words destroy; how they build up on the other hand, ch. xxx.-xxxiii., comp. especially xxxi. 28; xviii. 7-9; it was otherwise in a different age, "Isa." li. 16.

2. In his description of the symbols, vv. 11-16, the prophet has Amos, ch. vii.-viii. before his mind. The first symbol, vv. 11, 12, is in confirmation of

the last thought, vv. 9, 11, that the prophetic words (which at the time of Yéremyá were no longer received with anything like the undoubting fear of

\* Germ.: WACHholderbaum...denn WACHEN werde ich über mein wort.—Tr.

Yahvé said unto me: "thou hast well seen! | for I will *ever guard* my word, to perform it.||"

And Yahvé's word came unto me a second time in this wise: "What seest thou?" I said, "I see a pot amid flames, its front turned from the North!" And Yahvé said unto me: From the North will the evil come in flames over all the  
 15 inhabitants of the land! || For behold I call all the families of the northern kingdom hither, saith Yahvé: | they come then and place every one his throne outside before Jerusalem's gates, and against all its walls round about and against all cities of Yuda; || and then I speak with them my judgment concerning all their wickedness, | that they forsook me and burnt incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands. ||

## 3.

But thou wilt gird up thy loins, and arising speak to them whatsoever I commission thee; | be not dismayed before them, lest I dismay thee before them! || But I—behold I make thee to-day a defenced city and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, | Yuda's kings I mean princes priests, and the people of the land; || they will fight against thee but not overcome thee: | for I am with thee (saith Yahvé) to deliver thee.||

older times) really produce an effect, that Yahvé is *watchful* and energetic to execute what he intends. Any flourishing tree suffices to recall the idea of productive labour, and accordingly of this divine watchfulness and activity: an almond-tree שֶׁקֶד is selected here merely because its Hebrew name suggests the thought of *watching*, comp. xxxi. 28; xlv. 27.—The second symbol suggests at the same time the great and the lamentable means which Yahvé will use to execute in this way his threat: a boiling pot placed over flames suggests of itself the fire of war (as is so often the case in the ancient Arabic

songs, comp. e.g., Tabrizi on *Hamdsa*, p. 47), and that this pot appears as if it came from the North suggests of itself the attacks and devastations of the various Northern nations (so often mentioned below), who at last besieged and took Jerusalem also, vv. 13-16. Comp. the way in which Hezeqiel xxiv. 3 sq. then works out this symbol. On account of the paronomasia, תִּפְתָּח must be read instead of תִּפְתָּח, the meaning of *opening itself* being also too feeble: the paronomasia must clearly appear in the second no less than in the first symbol, and the LXX. had this reading.

3. But whatever may happen, Yéremyá may not *start back with trembling from before* any one, in order that, if he

has true courage in his heart in the presence of all men, he may be sustained and protected by Yahvé in the actual

work and conflict of the outward world, in order that Yahvé may not cause him to *fall down* and *tremble* before any one ! ver. 17. Thus Yahvé on his part makes him invincible against all men,

even kings, princes, priests, so that in all his many prophetic conflicts he is not overcome but constantly comes forth from them all with the victory of divine truth, vv. 18, 19 ; repeated xv. 20, 21.

## II. DENUNCIATIONS OF ISRAEL.

### Ch. ii.—xxiv.

#### 1. *The affection for Egypt, ch. ii.*

The first oracle which Yéremyá publicly delivered, and which must therefore have fallen in the thirteenth year of Yosia, mentioned i. 3, centres properly only around a prevailing affection of the people for Egypt as the new and dangerous thing of that time, because Egyptian morals and religions might find their way easily into Israel by a closer alliance with that land. Unfortunately other sources of information do not report many further particulars with regard to this tendency of the people at that time ;\* neither can it have been of long duration, since the following pieces do not refer to it, and Yosia subsequently marched against the Egyptian king Nekhô when he determined on the conquest of Syria, 2 Kings xxiii. 29. But although it was of short duration there was much that might promote it at the time of Nekhô's predecessor. Under Psammetichus Egypt became once more a powerful, flourishing kingdom, that began to cast covetous eyes upon Asia ; and on the part of Yuda, the internal reforms of this kingdom and its return to the strictly Mosaic principles did not take place before the eighteenth year of Yosia, 2 Kings xxii. 3. Accordingly an affection of this kind for Egypt and the desire to form a closer alliance with it is conceivable enough at that time, and perhaps the further prosecution of it was especially pre-

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\* Compare however the further proofs of the fact, *History of Israel*, IV. 218 sq. (III. 731 sq.)

vented by such warnings as those of Yéremyá. The prophet could not at that time threaten an invasion of the Northern nations : for these nations who are mentioned in every later piece do not appear in this at all (a very significant sign !); on the contrary, much prosperity seems to have been enjoyed in Jerusalem, so that with a fair degree of attention to the external laws people were even loudly boasting of their innocence, vv. 20, 23, 35, although the lukewarmness and indeed inward faithlessness of the people towards Yahvé, ver. 31, and the idolatry which was publicly tolerated in so many places, ver. 20 sq., were so little accordant therewith. After therefore the prophet has made a general introduction to his accusations in the first strophe vv. 2-9, in the second, vv. 10-20, he immediately advances to the rebuke of the chief point, and in the third, vv. 20-28, refutes the objections of the unprincipled multitude who deem themselves sufficiently pure and blameless, that in the fourth, vv. 29-37, half in earnest and half in ironical satire, he may draw the conclusion of this discourse against the foolish preference for Egypt.

It was above, p. 87, said that his earliest discourse was subsequently somewhat altered by the prophet himself, to suit later circumstances. But if the discourse is taken simply in its original extent and form, we perceive clearly what a glorious prophetic writer Yéremyá was when he first begun his labours, before the hard fortunes of his later years had dashed the first tender bloom of his literary activity also. If the small contemporary book of Ssephanya is compared with this discourse, it may very clearly be perceived what a fresh breath of entirely new prophetic thoughts and illustrations at that time passed through the discourses of our prophet who was then in his youth, and also what an original form the language of the prophets, then in its old age, took under his hand; and to correctly observe all this is particularly instructive.



## 1.

- ii. And Yahvé's word came unto me saying: "Go and cry  
 1 aloud before Jerusalem in this wise: thus saith Yahvé: | I re-  
 member thee the graciousness of thy youth, the love of  
 thine espousals, | how thou followedst me through the wilder-  
 ness, through unsown land: || "a sacred thing is Israel from  
 Yahvé, is his first fruit: | all that devour it will suffer, evil  
 will befall them! saith Yahvé!" || Hear ye Yahvé's word,  
 5 house Yaqob | and all ye families of the house Israel! || thus  
 saith Yahvé: what did your fathers find in me of wrong that  
 they departed from me | and following vanity became vain? ||  
 not thinking, "where is Yahvé that led us up from the land  
 of Egypt, that made us go through the wilderness, | through a  
 land of steppes and caverns, through a land of drought and  
 darkness, | through a land that no one ever passed through, and  
 where men never dwelt," || I brought you to a land of gardens,  
 to feast on its fruit and goodness: | but ye came and defiled my  
 land, making my heritage an abomination: || the priests said  
 not "where is Yahvé?" the expounders of the law knew me  
 not, and the shepherds committed treachery against me, | and  
 the prophets prophesied by Báal, and followed useless things. ||  
 Therefore will I yet contend with you, saith Yahvé, | and with  
 the sons of your sons will I contend!" ||

1. With the memory of the higher mission of the community and therefore of the glorious time of its formation, when in the midst of the privations of the desert yet with pure love and kindness she followed her God as a bride her bridegroom, and thereupon received also from him his special blessing and the lasting promises of his love,—with the memory of these things the first discourse of every prophet gladly begins, Isa. ii. 2-4, and so also this first discourse of Yéremyá, vv. 2, 3. Ver. 3 was probably copied verbally from a book resembling the present Pentateuch; *his firstfruit*, consecrated to him first before all other nations, sacred and beloved, like the ἀπαρχή, James i. 18; Rom. viii. 23; xvi. 5: but a sacred firstfruit of this

kind may not be devoured with impunity by those to whom it does not belong (in this case by the Heathen).—The question then is—has this first fair relationship been destroyed by Yahvé! or by the bride? O certainly not by Yahvé! He led her miraculously through the wild and unfruitful desert, so full of steppes and pits (bottomless morasses) safely into her fruitful country, on his part there was neither a wrong nor a blemish; but they, the fathers of those who are now living and the living themselves (comp. ver. 7 with ver. 5), without reason ran after vain gods and disgraced their beautiful country by their abominable deeds, even the leaders of the people of all kinds, vv. 5-8: therefore Yahvé must still go on to contend with them (although he has so

## 2.

- 10 For pass over to the islands of the Kittim and see, to Qedar send ye and attend carefully, | and see—whether the like of this hath happened? || hath a nation changed gods, although they are no-gods? | —but my people hath changed its majesty for useless things! || Be amazed ye heavens at this, | be astonished, shudder mightily! saith Yahvé: || for two evils hath my people committed: | me have they forsaken the fountain of living water — to dig as wells for themselves broken wells that hold no water! || [*Is then Israel a slave? or some one born in the house? | why became he*
- 15 *spoil, || do lions roar over him, sounding far and wide, | and was his land made waste, his cities devastated without any inhabitant? || also the sons of Memphis and Tahaphanes | will feed off for thee the crown! || Doth not that do this for thee, | that thou forsookest Yahvé thy God when he would have led thee upon the way? || ]—Therefore what hast thou to go to Egypt, to drink the water of the Nile? | and what hast thou to go to Assyria, to drink the water of the River? || Thy wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall punish thee! and then know and see, how evil and bitter it is that thou forsookest Yahvé thy God, | and my fear concerneth thee not,*
- 20 saith Lord Yahvé of Hosts; || for of old time have I broken thy yoke, burst thy fetters . . . .

often punished them already, comp. ver. 30), must commence a contention whose results, his punishments, even

2. To come at once to the main occasion of this discourse, the question is proposed, whether ever a nation, either of the West (*e.g.* the Kittim) or of the East (*e.g.* the Arabians, xlix. 28), has changed its gods? However the gods which other nations perhaps might change are really no-gods, as good as no gods at all: but in this case—how must heaven itself shudder with horror that the only nation which has the true God should exchange this God for no-gods, exchange its majesty, *i.e.*, its infinitely exalted, majestic God, whose glory ought to be reflected back upon his people, for dead, useless

their grandchildren will feel! ver. 9. Ver. 4 resembles Isa. ii. 5.

gods, living, perennial water for broken, failing wells, being thus guilty of two crimes at once? vv. 10-13. Therefore if Israel has already the *best* God, what just cause can impel it foolishly to hanker after other nations and gods, whether Egypt and Egyptian gods (as in this instance) or Assyria (as formerly in the time of Yesaya, comp. ver. 36), to wish to drink now from the sweet Nile, then from the wild Euphrates, as if foreign water were better than that of Siloah (Isa. viii. 6)?—it shall be chastised for this by the consequences of its own unfaithfulness towards Yahvé, in order that it may learn what it really

## 3.

And yet thou sayest "I transgress not!" | —while upon every high hill and under every green tree thou art lying playing the harlot! || and truly I planted thee with noble vines, all of them of true seed: | yet how art thou transformed to me into bastards of an ungenue vine! || Yea if thou washest thyself with lye, and takest never so much soap unto thee: | still thine iniquity is stained before me, saith Lord Yahvé; || how sayest thou "I am not defiled, have not followed

means without shame to forsake Him who has been its only redeemer from the days of old! vv. 18-20.—Just as the last thought of the ancient deliverance, ver. 20, is clearly not finished in the present text and the strophe is deficient at the end, so vv. 14-17 plainly did not belong here at least originally, because they interrupt the context. Vv. 14-16 describe the destruction of the Holy Land by the Chaldeans as already accomplished: Israel, the redeemed and therefore free nation, appears to have become a kidnapped slave, or (what is in the end equally bad) a house-slave, thus disgraced is the nation now and torn to pieces as by hungry lions! iv. 7; xlix. 19. But the Egyptians also (to whom so many of the most vigorous Judeans fled especially after the destruction of Jerusalem, ch. xl. sq.) will feed away the crown of its head, *i.e.*, lay it waste from top to bottom, make it as it were quite bald and naked, ver. 16; and all this because it forsook Yahvé when he was just leading it in the right way, ver. 17. By the last turn of the thought, ver. 17, the interpolated passage is intentionally brought into somewhat closer connexion with ver. 13, although the

whole passage disturbs the strict connexion of the thought, the strophe being occupied only with the censure of the tendency to enter into engagements with foreigners, there being no easy transition from ver. 13 to ver. 14, and the whole suiting a much later period of Yéremyá's life as was above (p. 87) said, and as must be concluded from the mention of Tahaphanes: for this previously unimportant city is elsewhere mentioned only in later pieces, xliii. 7, 8; xlv. 1; xlv. 14, and Ez. xxx. 18, where the word has a better punctuation. Instead of the Q'rî נִצְרָה ver. 15, the correct reading is נִצְרָה acc. iv. 7: xlv. 19, comp. the note on Zech. xi. 16; with regard to מוֹלִיכָה, ver. 17, see § 337c; זֹאת, ver. 17, refers emphatically to the following *inf.*, Isa. xxvii. 9, acc. § 174a. Ver. 20 cannot be understood to mean *long ago thou breakest thy yoke and rentest thy fetters and saidst, "I will not serve"* (acc. to the K'thîb), being then placed in the following strophe: in that case the figure of the rejection of restraint would have to be either carried out more definitely with regard to God or expressed quite generally as v. 5.

3. The present Jerusalem indeed maintains that it transgresses no commands, brings all due sacrifices, is innocent and follows not the common

Kanáanite gods: but the numerous other foreign forms of unchaste heathen worship which are everywhere visible, especially that of Molokh in

the Báals!" | see thy conduct in the valley, know what thou hast done! || A young mare camel light of foot crossing her ways, | a wild ass used to the desert, which in her heart's desire sniffeth the air: | her heat—who will restrain it? all they that seek her do not run themselves weary: in her month  
 25 they find her! ||—O leave thy foot no longer unshod, and thy throat thirsting! ||—And yet thou sayest: "in vain! no! for I love strangers, and them will I follow!" || As the thief is ashamed when discovered, so the house of Israel acts shamefully | they, their kings and princes, their priests and prophets, || when they say to the wood "my father art thou!" and to the stone "thou hast borne me!" | since they turn to me—backwards and not forwards! | But in the time of their evil they will say: "arise and help us!" || where then are thy gods which thou madest thee? let them arise, if they can help thee in the time of thine evil! | for as many as thy cities were thy gods, Yuda, and as many as the streets of Jerusalem they sacrificed to Báal. ||

the valley (of Ben-Hinnom), testify loudly against it, vii. 32; xxxii. 35: and if in the face of such proof it should take never so much pains to establish its purity and innocence, its guilt will still not become pure (like Isa. i. 18), its once noble vine has wholly degenerated (like Isa. v. 1, 2), vv. 20-23. When it is seen (vv. 22b-25a) with what blind desire it runs away to the licentious religions, it might be supposed that it were a young mare in her heat running wildly hither and thither after the stallion, or rather (inasmuch as these licentious forms of worship were particularly observed on solitary heights, ver. 20) a wild she ass on the steep desolate heights, sniffing the air from running and heat in the time of her desire, the he ass finding her without any trouble; and from pity she ought to be exhorted not too eagerly to race without shoes and in a

most violent thirst.—Thus driven into a corner, the only thing left is to maintain that it is now at least too late, that all warning is in vain (xviii. 12), they will simply resort to their paramours (the idols) and listen to no admonitions! ver. 25b: yea, as disgracefully as a thief Israel permits itself to be caught in the insane worship of wood and stone, as if they were its parents and benefactors, in revolt from the true God (vii. 24; Hos. vii. 16): but in the day of calamity they will discover their folly too late! vv. 26-28. This long strophe falls into two equal halves, each of them beginning with וְהָאֱמֹרִי; just as this word stands at the head of the following strophe, ver. 35.\* The Q'rî has the proper reading אַעֲבֹר, ver. 20, comp. vv. 23, 35; xxxiv. 18, the K'thib אַעֲבֹר having arisen from a mistaken division of the verses. In both ver. 23 and ver. 25 there is also a false

\* There is some mistake here, it seems, ver. 35 beginning with וְהָאֱמֹרִי, but the strophe with ver. 29.—Tr.



## 4.

- Wherefore contend ye against me? | ye all have betrayed  
 30 me! saith Yahvé; || in vain smote I your sons—correction  
 they received not, | your sword devoured your prophets like a  
 destroying lion. || O contemporaries, see yourselves Yahvé's  
 word: was I a desert for Israel, or a land of darkness? |  
 wherefore said my people "we doubt, we come no more unto  
 thee!" || forgetteth then a maid her ornament, a bride her  
 girdle? | —yet my people have forgotten me days without num-  
 ber! || How well goest thou to seek dalliance! | therefore hast  
 thou also accustomed thy ways to the wickedness; even on thy  
 skirts is found the soul-blood of the innocent sufferers: | not  
 on the place of murder found I it, but upon all these. || —  
 35 And yet thou sayest, "I am indeed innocent; just now his  
 anger is departed from me!" | —behold I will come to judgment  
 with thee because thou sayest "I sinned not!" || Why racest  
 thou so greatly to change thy way? | —also of Egypt wilt  
 thou be ashamed as thou wert ashamed of Assyria! || from it  
 also wilt thou go away, with thine hands upon thine head! |  
 for Yahvé despiseth thy supports, and thou wilt have no  
 success in them. ||

division. מִנְחָה, ver. 24, properly *occasio* (*zeitigkeit*), as the *month*, accordingly, when salacious animals are spoken of, the period of copulation;

4. Conclusion. It is not Yahvé therefore who is at fault; the past days of calamity when even the prophets (under Manasseh) were carried off by the devouring *sword of Israel*, *i.e.*, by the divine chastisement appointed for the nation (Zech. xiii. 7), ought to have been a warning to the nation, as, on the other hand, the present generation living in prosperity and security, seeing the inexhaustible love of Yahvé, who is inseparably allied to it, ought from a reasonable degree of gratitude not to forget him in its indecision and lukewarmness! vv. 29-32. But how admirably the journey to its paramour (to Egypt) becomes the nation! well, it

comp. *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1828, p. 485, Ver. 28, the LXX have the last member required by the structure of the verse, comp. xi. 13.

has become so accustomed to its transgressions that it cannot leave them off! ver. 33 (intensely ironical); although the blood of murdered innocence cleaves to all the skirts of its garments, not even concealed in the murderer's pit, but letting itself be seen quite openly (after Isa. i. 15, 16), it still claims to be innocent, because it is at present prosperous and accordingly perceives nothing of Yahvé's wrath! vv. 34, 35.—But such monstrous self-deception cannot remain unpunished! Whether it resorts to other false ways, running to Egypt as formerly to Assyria—from thence also will it return ashamed and clasping the head with the hands from

pain and wounds (2 Sam. xiii. 19) ! vv. 36, 37.—The extension of ver. 29 in the LXX, *ye all did wickedly, ye all betrayed me*, is frigid and quite unsuitable at the opening of the strophe, where the discourse has gradually to rise afresh.—The word מַאֲפֵלִיָּה, ver. 31, with this punctuation must mean *Yah's (Yahvé's) darkness*, and that would in this case be simply a great darkness : but acc. §§ 165b, 270c, מַאֲפֵלִיָּה, *darkness*, may be derived from מַאֲפֵל, *part. Hiph.*, like הִחְשִׁיךְ, xiii. 16, acc. § 122c, and an uncompounded word is here sufficient acc. ver. 6. רָד, *to waver*, as Hos. xii. 1 [xi. 12] = not to be firm in faithfulness, *to doubt*; for naturally the prophet intends merely to bring out their hidden thoughts before

their eyes in plain words. The clause עַל כָּל אֱלֵהָ, ver. 34, refers back to the first word בִּכְנֻפֶיךָ, since either prep. עַל or בְּ is here equally suitable in point of sense; and מִחֲתָרָת, as a *place of breaking in*, Job xxiv. 16, is pretty much the same as what Yéremyá, vii. 11, calls a den of murderers. It is bad enough when the eye of God finds such drops of blood upon any place of the Holy Land where there has been breaking in and murder: but these people boast even before God of their deeds of murder committed on innocent people, and appear even quite openly in the Temple, *e.g.*, unreformed therefore, as in their bloody attire, and do not care whether the blood is still seen cleaving to all their skirts or not.

## 2. *Denunciation on the occasion of the arrival of Northern Devastators*, ch. iii.—vi.

The prophet must proclaim general and severe punishment as about to come upon Jerusalem and the whole of Yuda; and in the background, to attest the truth of such threats, he sees the certain arrival of the devastating enemies from the far North, before whom there is already heard the loud cry of alarm and appeal for help, and from whom people seek to escape by hasty flight into the hiding places and strongholds, iv. 5-7, 13, 15-17, 29; v. 6, 15-17; vi. 1-5, 22, 23, 25. True, there are many, even prophets and priests, who will hear nothing of such great trouble close at hand, who deny that the internal condition of the nation is so mournful and fatal, and prefer to flatter the people with promises of salvation and blessing, iv. 10; v. 12, 13, 31; vi. 1, 10, 14, with which this misled nation is very well pleased, v. 31; in certain moments of danger, the people deceived by such leaders may also really promise amendment and cry to Yahvé in prayer with the presentation of external sacrifices, as must actually have been the

case at that very time, iii. 1, 10 ; v. 2 ; vi. 20. But Yéremyá can neither agree with those hypocritical prophets nor consider this amendment true and sincere : he sees too plainly through the profound moral corruption of the magnates as well as of the common people, the folly of the idolatry which the nation persists in following, iii. 2 ; iv. 30, 31 ; v. 7, 19 sq., the injustice in social life, v. 26-28 ; vi. 6, 7, 13, the mock sanctity in the worship of Yahvé, iii. 1 ; v. 2, the resistance of the more serious prophetic truths, and other signs of the continued absence of a sincere and wise reformation. Accordingly, though with profound sorrow and painful emotion, he is compelled to behold the approach of heavy calamity, moved by the pure spirit ; he is unable to think, as others do, that the threatening wrath of Yahvé has abated, iv. 8, 26, 28, comp. ii. 35, and can only anticipate in the arrival of the strange enemies from the North a grievous instrument of the divine punishment.

As the prophet is about to present these thoughts at length, there first comes to his mind, as a counter picture, the fate of the Northern kingdom, which had been destroyed long before, and in the preparatory part, iii. 2—iv. 2, he describes how that kingdom had nevertheless not sunk essentially so low as Yuda has now done, and now, after long and grievous punishments, is much more than Yuda worthy as well as able to receive again divine salvation. The great grievous chastisement therefore must irrevocably come upon Yuda and Jerusalem, which is at present not even capable of true reformation and amendment ! iv. 3-31. Or if it is supposed that the threat is too severe, closer examination will only too clearly show how truly everything is corrupt in Jerusalem, and how necessary the divine punishment is, ch. v. Indeed, it is accordingly said at last, this chastisement by the Northern barbarians is already firmly determined upon by Yahvé, nothing can avert it, and the prophet merely announces what he must announce, after strictest examination, and according to divine necessity, ch. vi.—

Accordingly this discourse falls into three parts, of which the middle one as the main part supplies the cogent proof that the chastisement must come; an introductory part precedes. Each of the three parts falls again into four strophes of considerable length, of which only the last in each case hastens to an end with greater rapidity and brevity; the introductory part contains three strophes of considerable length.

The proof of the internal corruption with the threat is in the whole piece so much the chief object that a comforting description of a better future is interwoven only in the introductory part, at a point where it was important to excite as it were the jealousy of Yuda by a splendid description of the hope of the Northern kingdom which had long since disappeared, iii. 12—iv. 2; in the chief part it is only rarely that a small restrictive clause modifies the severe threats which older prophets had previously uttered, iv. 27 *b*; v. 10 *b*, 18; comp. xxx. 11; Amos ix. 8; Lev. xxvi. 44. Nor is it more frequently that a word of exhortation finds its way into the overwhelming darkness of the prospect and the profound sorrow, iv. 3, 4, 14; vi. 8. In other respects this piece has the greatest similarity with the book of Ssephanya, which belongs almost to the same time and owes its origin to the same occasion, comp. *e.g.* vi. 2 with Sseph. iii. 1. Already some shadows of the troubles which must have early come upon Yéremyá in his prophetic career, have reached this early piece; in other respects it is not only the longest piece of his literary work, but also the most finished of all those of his that have come down to us.

It is moreover specially remarkable that Yéremyá here, ch. iii., v. 11, and substantially also ii. 4, shows such a careful regard for the members of the former kingdom of the Ten Tribes then left of the captivity of more than 100 years previously: it is impossible not to see that at that time a more active, if primarily only spiritual, connexion between them and the kingdom of Yuda had been again commenced, of which



another proof was found above, Nahum i. 11 sq. Nor can it be denied that above, ii. 4, Yéremyá, like some other prophets (Nah. ii. 3; Obad. ver. 18, "Isa." xlvi. 3), distinguishes Yuda in conjunction with Israel as the kingdom of the Ten Tribes also by the name Yaqob. But here Yéremyá distinguishes only between Israel and Yuda, and coins for both, in conformity with the dark side of their character, the new names, the *Backsliding one*, the *Renegade*, and the *faithless one*, the *Traitress*, in which Ez. ch. xxiii. follows him with the formation of new names.

iii.

1 The word which came unto Yéremyá from Yahvé in the days of the king Yosia in this wise :

Ver. 1, לֹא־אֵמַר is as unintelligible as the note of time ver. 6 in such an unexpected place, since the piece does not commence there. Incontestably לֹא־אֵמַר, ver. 1, is only the last fragment of the complete phrase which we have a right, acc. vii. 1; xi. 1; xiv. 1, etc. to expect here, and the note of time may also have got displaced from its position before לֹא־אֵמַר, and by mistake put into ver. 6. In ver. 6, then, there remains simply the same transitional phrase which occurs in ver. 11, and is all that is needed, and which although in the middle of the strophe could not well be spared, there being a decided turn of the discourse.

#### I. *The Comparison of Israel and Yuda.* Cap. iii. 1—iv. 2.

Yéremyá commences with Yuda alone, in which some isolated essays of reform, though always of much too half-hearted and fitful a character, were then being made during the time immediately preceding Yosia's national reformation. But before the close of the first strophe, vv. 1-10, the discourse passes to the comparison of this kingdom with the sister kingdom of former times, in order to describe in the second, vv. 11-20, how the divine Messianic compassion may now turn rather

towards the scattered remnants of it than to Yuda, and in the third, ver. 21—iv. 2, how true repentance and reformation, answering to the divine compassion, may also be rather looked for from that kingdom.

## 1.

If a man put away his wife so that she goeth from him and becometh another's, | will he return unto her again? would not such a land be certainly desecrated? | —and thou (Ssion!) hast played the harlot with many friends and wilt—return unto me? saith Yahvé. || Lift up thine eyes unto the bald heights and see: where hast thou not been dishonoured? | in the way thou liedst in wait for them like an Arab in the desert, and desecratedst the land with thy harlotries and thy wickedness. || Though rain-torrents and latter-rain came not, | yet the forehead of a harlot hadst thou, wouldst by no means be ashamed. || Yea just then calledst me “Father!” | “the husband of my youth art thou!” || “will he keep anger for ever? or retain wrath perpetually?”—behold thou spakest and—didst wickedness and carried it out! ||

And Yahvé said unto me: Didst thou see what the Renegade Israel did? | she went upon every high mountain and under every green tree and played the harlot there; || I thought “after she hath done all this she will return unto me!” | but she returned not. This the Traitress her sister Yuda saw | saw that I for all the reasons because the Renegade Israel had committed adultery put her away and gave unto her her bill of divorce: | —and yet the Traitress Yuda her sister feared not, but went and played the harlot likewise! || And notwithstanding her infamous harlotry, that she desecrated the land | and com-  
 10 mitted adultery with the stone and with the wood, || yet with all this the Traitress her sister Yuda returned not unto me with her whole heart, | but only with a lie! saith Yahvé. ||

1. Yuda appears as if it desired to return to Yahvé, vv. 1, 10: but just as little as a husband that has divorced his wife can really again return to the woman that has taken up with other men, as if he were still her husband, (for acc. Deut. xxiv. 4 that would be only a continuation and aggravation of

the whoredom, and the land in which that took place would certainly (*inf. abs.*) be terribly desecrated), so little can the community Yuda, after that she has wantonly run after all idōls and desecrated the land, ver. 2, truly return unto Yahvé, especially since she has not been restrained by all the past divine

## 2.

Thus said Yahvé unto me: More righteous hath the Renegade Israel shown herself than the Traitress Yuda. || Go so that thou criest these words northwards and sayest: "Return Renegade Israel! saith Yahvé, I will not darken my countenance upon you, | for I am gracious, saith Yahvé, will not keep anger for ever. || Only know thy guilt that thou wast disobedient unto Yahvé thy God, | and scatteredst thy steps after foreigners under every green tree, and my voice ye obeyed not," saith Yahvé. || —"Return renegade sons!" saith Yahvé, "for I am your protector, | and I take you one from a city and two from a family and bring you  
 15 to Ssion, || give you shepherds after my heart: | who feed you then wisely and prudently. || And when you increase then and are fruitful in the land in those days, saith Yahvé, | the ark of

chastisements, ver. 3: the relation between them is no more pure and sacred, ver. 1, and a return in appearance only is worse than an open continuance of unfaithfulness; unhappily her power truly to return has been exhausted, as not long ago after fresh signs of the divine displeasure she prayed in beautiful language to Yahvé for new favour and abatement of the old sufferings, she immediately fell again into her sin and carried it out with cool determination! vv. 4, 5.—The Northern sister also, the Renegade, as she may be called by a bad name, elsewhere appropriated to the Heathen, sinned in the same way and continued obstinately in her ungrateful impenitence: but instead of Yuda, the Traitress, having seen this, yea instead of having seen further how Yahvé was finally compelled to completely put away (*i.e.*, destroy and send her into exile) her sister on account of her unfaithfulness, taking warning from the sad example,

2. The important position is therefore established, that the Northern kingdom was more just and may easily become more worthy of divine forgiveness in

she has herself followed it, vv. 6-8; and although by the disgrace of her whoredom she desecrated the land and fell so low as to worship stone and wood, she still has not truly returned—at most only in appearance, vv. 9, 10. Ver. 8, וְהָיָה must be read instead of וְהָיָה, as the continuation of ver. 7; only then is everything from ver. 6 to ver. 10 completely harmonious. Accordingly וְהָיָה, must be read ver. 9 like ver. 2; as to וְהָיָה see § 345 b; then the rest of ver. 9 from מִקֵּץ is to be taken in conjunction with ver. 10, acc. § 348a, like v. 28; vi. 16, 19c; קָל almost equal to קָלִי, which acc. § 114d is formed from the same root קָל, and can on that account therefore easily bear a similar meaning; the prep. מִן before this קָל is properly *after* in the temporal sense, which in this case comes to much the same as our *though, in spite of* [*Germ. trotz*].

comparison with Yuda, which will not take warning from the nearest and clearest historical example, ver. 11. To the Northern kingdom Yahvé himself

the covenant of Yahvé will no more be spoken of, nor will it come to mind, | it will not be made mention of nor missed, nor will it be made again: || in that time Jerusalem will be called the throne of Yahvé, | and all the Heathen flow unto it, on account of Yahvé's name, | and follow no more the stubbornness of their wicked heart. || In those days will they of Yuda's house walk together with Israel's house | and come together from the North-land and from all the lands unto that land which I gave as a heritage to your fathers. || —I thought indeed: O how will I place thee amongst sons, | and give to thee a goodly land, a heritage of beauty amongst the hosts of Heathen! | and thought: "my father" thou wilt call me, and  
 20 from my track never depart! || Surely as a wife became unfaithful to her husband, | so ye became unfaithful to me, house of Israel! saith Yahvé. ||

proclaims forgiveness by the prophet, He will not darken his countenance towards it (Gen. iv. 6, and Lev. xvii. 10). ver. 12. If it only comes to a true knowledge of its earlier sins, especially its foolish running about after strange gods, and to genuine repentance, He, its eternal protector\* (**בַּעַל בִּי** here and xxxi. 32 = **מִשַּׁל בִּי**), will again collect and bring them into the renewed Davidic kingdom, even if the reformed were very few (*one, two*), vv. 13-15, comp. xxxi. 8; xxxiii. 15; then at last wood and stone will no longer be deemed sacred, not even the ark of the covenant which is now foolishly so much missed, xxxi. 31-33, but the entire kingdom will be filled with the spirit† (Rev. xxi. 22) on this account a powerful source of attraction to all the Heathen that have become alive to the truth, vv. 16, 17, comp. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16; and then the remnants of these two once hostile kingdoms of Israel hasten in rivalry with each other unto Yahvé, ver. 18. It is true, not to leave the serious aspect of the case

at the end unmentioned, Yahvé has with joy from the first resolved highly to distinguish Israel and as a favourite first-born (Ex. iv. 22) to rear it up to be a faithful child; if it nevertheless fell away, that was unfaithfulness as great as when a woman is unfaithful to her husband! ver. 19, 20, which severe words at the end are intended to evoke the confession of its sins from Israel. The extent to which the ark of the covenant could be missed in those days, ver. 16, is explained *History of Israel*, IV. 209 (III. 718). In ver. 18 **וְלִכְנִי** must be closely connected with **וְיָבֹא** and the **עַל** between be understood acc. § 217 *i δ*; at the same time **וּמִפְּלֵ הָאֲרָצוֹת** **מֵאֶרֶץ צֶפֶן** must be inserted after **לִכְנִי**, after the LXX. The word **עֲבָאוֹת**, ver. 19, must be construed as dependent on the previous **בִּי**, somewhat boldly, it is true, with a change of construction, § 351*a*; similarly ver. 23; **אֲכַן**, ver. 20, is quite the Aram. *hōcan*, like "Isa." xl. 7, comp. § 105 *d*.

\* *Schutzherr*.—Tr.† *Durchgeistet*.—Tr.



3.

A voice is heard upon the heights, tears of entreaty of the sons of Israel, | that they have perverted their way, have forgotten Yahvé their God ! || “ “ Return renegade sons, I heal all your apostasy ! ” ” | “ behold we have come unto thee, because thou Yahvé art our God ! || Surely, in vain from the hills is the noise, from the mountains ; | surely, in Yahvé our God is Israel’s salvation ! || and the shame devoured our father’s labour from our youth, | their flocks and their herds, their  
25 sons and their daughters : || let us lie in our shame, and our disgrace cover us, | because against Yahvé our God we and our fathers sinned from our youth even unto to-day, and  
iv. obeyed not Yahvé our God ! ” || — If thou returnest (saith  
1 Yahvé), unto me returnest, | and puttest away thine abominations from thy mouth, and before my face—before that fleest not, || but swearest “ as Yahvé liveth ! ” with faithfulness, with justice and with righteousness : | then will “ nations bless themselves in him and of him boast themselves. ” ||

3. And not in vain is this gracious though stern address directed to the Northern kingdom : already there is heard from the same heights upon which formerly, vv. 2, 6, the wild worship of idols was raging, the supplicating voice of the Israelites seeking forgiveness, ver. 21. Distinctly, profoundly, and truly, is re-echoed in their souls the divine requirement and promise, ver. 22 *a* (from Hos. xiv. 2, 5) : and, lo, they gladly comply with it (comp. Job xlii. 3-5), knowing that the wild, noisy worship of the idols upon the mountains and hills, vv. 2, 6, is vain, yea, that *the shame*, *i.e.*, the shameful Astarte (xi. 13 from Hos. ix. 10) from of old only ruined the resources and the prosperity of the nation : well, now they will lay themselves in profound repentance in *their shame*, endure their punishment, that they may see whether

Yahvé will deliver them from it ! vv. 22 *b*—25. Whereupon the divine voice then replies kindly but severely : if it really return, no more eat the *abominations*, *i.e.*, the abominable Heathen sacrifices (Zech. ix. 7), in brief, if (unlike what Yuda is now doing, iii. 10) it sincerely and righteously swear by Yahvé, the Heathen, according to the ancient promise Gen. xii. 3, which had just been mentioned iii. 17, will rejoice in and boast of Israel as their benefactor, iv. 1, 2, since the salvation that Israel experiences reacts upon all Heathen, “ Isa. ” lxxv. 16. Ver. 1 there is wanting “ *יְהוָה* ” before “ *בְּפִי* ”, which the LXX probably still read without the present variation. It is remarkable how the last words of iv. 2 have quite the appearance of a learned quotation from some book.

II. *The Punishment.*

Ch. iv. 3-31.

With all the more urgency the exhortation therefore now comes back to Yuda: but as from the certain presentiment of the unprepared state of Israel's mind for a real return to Yahvé, the prophet forthwith forebodes in the midst of his opening exhortations the approach of the due punishments, vv. 3-10, in the consideration of which he is already compelled to speak to Yuda with stern rebukes, as if he were carried away by the terrible wrath of this future, vv. 11-18; and however mournful this future may be, the chastisement it brings is as certain as it is necessary, vv. 19-26, and in spite of resistance of various kinds will not fail to come, vv. 27-31.

## 1.

For thus saith Yahvé to the men of Yuda and Jerusalem: Till you a tillage and sow not upon thorns! || let yourselves be circumcised by Yahvé, remove the foreskin of your heart, ye men of Yuda and inhabitants of Jerusalem, | lest as fire mine anger break forth and burn with none to extinguish it, for the wickedness of your deeds! || —Announce ye in Yuda and in Jerusalem proclaim and say, sound the trumpet in the land, | cry with full voice and say: "Assemble yourselves that we may go into the defenced cities!" || Set up a banner towards Ssion, flee tarry not! | for "evil I am bringing from the North and great shattering!" || The lion advanceth from his thicket, and the destroyer of nations journeyeth marcheth forth from his place, | to make thy land [O Yuda] a desert, that thy cities lie waste without an inhabitant! ||—For this gird you in mourning weeds, lament and wail, | because Yahvé's heat of anger hath not yet departed from him!" || For on that day, saith Yahvé, will the heart of the king and the heart of the princes fail, | the priests become amazed, and the prophets  
 10 astounded, || so that it is said: "O Lord Yahvé! surely thou hast deceived this nation and Jerusalem, saying. " "Peace will be unto you!" " | but the sword reacheth now unto the life." ||

1. Yuda ought first seriously to labour to get out of its present dege-

nerate condition, to till its fields which have run wild and must first be cleansed

## 2.

\* A wind of the most arid heights in the desert bloweth against the daughter of my people | —not to winnow and not to cleanse; || a full wind from this cometh unto me: | now will I also speak judgments with them! || Behold like clouds it ascendeth, | and like the storm are his chariots, swifter than eagles are his horses: | woe unto us for we are destroyed! || Wash from wickedness thine heart O Jerusalem, that thou mayest be succoured! | how long shall remain in thy bosom thy vain thoughts? || —For hark some one announceth from  
 15 Dán, | and proclaimeth calamity from the mountains of Ephráim; || it is already said to the nations “behold they come,” it is already proclaimed over Jerusalem “watchmen come from the country that is far off!” | and over Yuda’s cities the cry is loud. || Like field-keepers are they already round about her† “because she† faithlessly forsook me,” saith Yahvé, || thy way and thy doings wrought this for thee, | this is thy wickedness, that bitterness, that this now reacheth unto thine heart! ||

from thorns (from Hos. x. 12), to receive the true circumcision, in order that the threatening evil may not be irretrievably poured out (from Amos v. 6; Isa. i. 31), vv. 3, 4, comp. ix. 25. Already alarm may be given and all who dwell north of Ssion advised to flee thither and into the other fortresses: so certain, according to the divine will, is the near approach of devastating northern soldiers! vv. 5-7, comp. ver. 21, vi. 1, 17; xlii. 14; Hos. v. 8; viii. 1; Ez. xxxiii. 2-7. Everything must

loudly call to profound mourning, ver. 8: for although the magnates and prophets will not yet perceive the approaching calamity, they will then be themselves greatly amazed at it and thrown into confusion and dismay, and there will be general complaint at having been misled by the false prophets, vv. 9, 10; comp. xiv. 13; xxiii. 17. Ver. 10 instead of נִאֲמַר we must read נִאֲמַר, which alone suits this context, though not xiv. 13: the LXX had already committed the mistake.

2. Already the fatal scorching wind is felt, which, coming from the driest heights in the desert, not serving therefore to purify the air and to winnow the corn in threshing, but drying up everything, blows from those regions towards Ssion: and the prophet as if in antici-

pation blown upon by a wind of this character, must now at once begin to describe the threatening advance of the northern soldiers (Isa. xiv. 31; Hab. i. 8) and exhort Jerusalem to reform, vv. 11, 12: it is the keen wind which precedes the rising tempest, and what will these

\* *At that time will it be said to this nation and to Jerusalem.*

† *i.e.*, the city of Jerusalem.

## 3.

- “My feelings, my feelings! I must tremble! the chambers of my heart—my heart rageth to me, I cannot hold my peace! | for the loud trumpet heareth my soul, the alarm-cry  
 20 of war; || wounds upon wounds are met with, yea laid waste is the whole land; | suddenly are my tents wasted, in a moment my curtains. || How long shall I see the banner, | shall I hear the loud trumpet?” || — For foolish is my people, me they know not; | senseless sons are they, and not understanding are they, | wise are they—to do evil, but to do good they understand not! || —I saw the earth—it was a desert and void, | and unto the heaven—the light was gone; || I saw the mountains—they trembled, | and all the hills were shaken; || I saw—there were no men, | and all the birds of the  
 25 heaven had flown; || I saw—there was the fruit-field, the desert, | and all its cities destroyed—before Yahvé, before the heat of his anger! ||

storm-clouds bring when they get nearer? the northern enemy! ver. 13 (subsequently further expanded, Hab. i. 8 sq.): O, then, take warning in time thou city which hast only too long thought of nothing but vanity! ver. 14.—For from the North of Palestine the misery that is coming from the further North is already being proclaimed, it is proclaimed to all the nations in the south (vi. 18), especially to Jerusalem and the cities of Yuda, that they come, the besiegers (נְצִרִים like Isa. i. 9, comp. below v. 6 c, vi. 6; Ps. lv. 19) come! vv. 15, 16.—Yes, Yéremyá already sees Jerusalem surrounded as it were by keenly observing field-keepers—because she faithlessly forsook Yahvé; her

own morals and deeds, as they can only proceed from wickedness, have brought about this result that the bitterness, yea that the bitterness reaches to her heart and life, vv. 17, 18, this strophe thus closing like the previous one. Since הַשְׁמִיעוּ עָלַי plainly corresponds to וִיתְּנוּ עָלַי הַנְּפִירִי, and הַשְׁמִיעוּ must be read in the *perff.*, and פָּאוּ inserted after הִנֵּה as the LXX have done, the verse being then only made clear.—But on the other hand, the first words of this strophe have no clear connexion in this place, and if connected with the previous strophe would hardly find a fitting place, comp., however, xiv. 17.

3. And then, it is true, everybody hearing this trumpet of calamity and beholding this banner of alarm and flight will be suddenly seized by the most violent pain and distress, so that they, aroused from their quiet, must cry out on account of the general devas-

tation and ruin without end, as is graphically described, vv. 19-21. But the divine voice can only reply to this distress with calm reprimand; the folly of the people, which continues as much as ever, explains such calamities! ver. 22, after Hos. xiii. 13 *et al.* Nor can



## 4.

For thus saith Yahvé: A waste will the whole land become |  
 (yet a full end will I not make !); || for this will the earth  
 mourn, and the heavens grow black above: | because thou\*  
 spakest and yet did not repent, didst purpose and yet didst  
 not turn therefrom. || —At the voice of the horseman and bow-  
 man fleeth the whole land, | they enter into hiding-places and  
 into clefts they press: | every city is desolated, and no man  
 30 dwelleth in them. || —And thou child of destruction—what  
 doest thou that thou clothest thyself with purple, that thou  
 deckest thee in golden ornaments, | that thou paintest† thine  
 eyes with antimony‡ ornamentest thyself in vain? | —the  
 lovers despise thee, thy life they seek! || For the voice as of  
 one trembling I heard, anguish as of a young mother, | the  
 voice of the daughter Ssion sobbing spreading out her hands:  
 | “woe is me! for my soul is faint from murderers!”||

the clear prophetic glance of the prophet into the surely approaching chaos help confirming the threat that a great universal derangement is about to take place as a result of the anger of Yahvé which has not yet been withdrawn, vv. 23-26, ver. 23 after Gen. i. 2; ver.

26 after Isa. xxxii. 15; the construction at the close like xxiii. 9. Instead of שְׂמַעְתִּי, ver. 19, it is better to read שָׁמַעְתָּ, since *thou, my soul!* *heardst*, is neither in itself nor in the context allowable.

4. For although (as is further explained xxx. 11 sq.) everything cannot in Israel be destroyed utterly, it is nevertheless certain, inasmuch as the community notwithstanding all its good words and thoughts never comes to true repentance and reformation (as had been already similarly said iii. 4, 5; iv. 1, 2, and therefore may be repeated here only thus briefly, comp. v. 2, 3; vi. 14, 15), that in the immediate future a great destruction is coming, in the forefeeling of which as it were the world is already compelled to mourn, vv. 27, 28; namely, everybody will flee and everything be laid waste at the approach of the northern enemy, ver. 29. What does this city that is devoted to destruction

mean that on special feast days (one of which was then probably being held, comp. v. 7, 8, 19 and Isa. xxii. 1 sq.) she lavishly adorns herself and keeps her feasts for her idols as for paramours? alas, only too soon will her folly perish; just as everywhere where there is no true love but only wantonness, these licentious passions will end in hostility and murder, so far from the paramours and idols delivering the foolish victim, from contempt and love of murder, they hand her over to the barbarians to be slain! vv. 30, 31. Ver. 28, which the LXX had already misunderstood as well as the Massôra, זִמְרָתִי must be placed in a second member, following the LXX, and then

\* Jerusalem, the community.

† Germ. *bestippst*.—Tr.

‡ Germ. *bleiglanz*.—Tr.

תְּשׁוּבִי be read instead of אֲשׁוּב, as iii. 8. It is explained § 175 *a* how שְׂדֹד, ver. 30, can have a feminine subject; קָרַע, ver. 31, is as in Samaritan the Aram. קָרַח and Arab. *karaha* to prick, puncture, comp. similarly xxii. 14. Instead of עָבִים, ver. 29, which

hardly supplies a proper meaning, it is probably better to read גְּבִים after xiv. 3, literally *cisterns*, here forming a good antithesis to the high clefts of the rocks; and instead of the first הָעִיר the reading of the LXX הָאָרֶץ is better.

### III. *The Proof.*

#### Ch. v.

If these threatenings and punishments are thought to be too severe, let Jerusalem be examined most closely to see whether there are even a few righteous people to make it possible to grant her forgiveness! But in vain does Yahvé offer his forgiveness: when all are corrupt, must he not punish? whatever aspect is considered, there is nothing in them anywhere but the plainest and most grievous transgressions, general immorality in the case of high and low, vv. 1-10, intentional denial of the prophetic truth, vv. 11-18, false fear (religion), vv. 19-25, violation of justice, vv. 26-31; and thus there follows from all considerations of their case the certainty that here there can be no forgiveness, that their own transgressions must precipitate them into misery; that is here the constant refrain of the end of the strophes, vv. 9, 15-18, 25, 29-31.

#### V.

##### 1.

- 1 Roam ye through Jerusalem's lanes, and see ye now and know and seek in their streets, | whether ye find one, whether there is one that doeth justice that seeketh the truth, | that I may forgive her! || they who even if they say "by the life of Yahvé!" | —nevertheless swear falsely.\* || —O Yahvé, thine eyes are surely truthful?—thou smotest them and they trembled not, destroyedst them—they refused to receive correction, | made their face harder than rock, refused to return. || Well, I thought "only poor are they, | they are befooled because they know not Yahvé's way, the justice of their God: ||
- 5 I will betake me unto the magnates and speak with them, for they know Yahvé's way, the justice of their God:" | but they

\* Germ. Zum falschen.—Tr.

had all of them together broken the yoke, burst the fetters ! || —Wherefore a lion from the forest smiteth them, a wolf of the steppes wasteth them, | a panther watcheth against their cities, everyone that goeth out of them is torn in pieces, | — because many are their misdeeds, numerous their backslidings. || Wherefore shall I pardon thee ? | thy sons forsook me and swore by not-gods, | I satiated them—or they committed adultery, and to the harlot's house they flocked together, || fed lusty horses have they become, | the one neigheth after the wife of the other : || shall I not visit for such things, saith Yahvé, | or on such a nation shall not my soul take revenge ? ||

## 2.

10 Plunge ye into her blossoms and destroy (yet make not a full end!), | remove her branches, because they are not Yahvé's ! || For they have become wholly faithless to me the house Israel and the house Yuda, saith Yahvé ; || denied

1. As to לִבָּן, ver. 2, see § 353 b, and subsequently Hupfeld in the *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, Vol. II. 481. The prophet himself at once foresees, ver. 3, the enquiry announced, vv. 1, 2, will end badly : who can doubt that the Omniscient One long ago saw everything here also faithfully and accurately ? that he formerly punished them as they deserved without the effect of their submitting themselves to reform ? (לִאֲמוֹנָה acc. § 217 d). Yet if the common multitude with their dull depressed feelings do not come to true knowledge and conduct, the prophet had the right to expect this at least in the case of the magnates : but he found them having cut off all restraint even, without any fear or reverence of things

2. On the contrary, their too luxurious branches and blossoms must be cut off, ver. 10 (as vi. 9 from Isa. xviii. 5 ; v. 1-6) : on that account also that a great part of their unfaithfulness towards Yahvé consists in the intentional denial of the prophetic truths and threats,

divine ! vv. 4, 5. Therefore it is already as if the northern enemy, threatened above, were amongst them, ver. 6, comp. Hos. xiii. 7 : or shall Yahvé forgive them perhaps, for that reason that they have become unfaithful to him their father and preserver, because having been plentifully satiated by him they abandoned themselves to the luxuriously lascivious life of idolatry ? vv. 7-9. Instead of מְשָׁפִים, ver. 8, it is probably better to read מְשָׁפִים = מְשָׁקִים from הַשְׁקָה and the Arab. *shaiyik* with the meaning of lusty, lascivious, which is alone suitable here ; ver. 7, וְהִשְׁבַּע, is also better than וְהִשָּׁא, as the whole context shows, comp. ver. 28, Hos. xiii. 6 Deut. xxxii. 15.

so that they even deliberately and publicly wish that the prophets together with their words might be completely silent and perish ! ver. 11-13. But only so much the more must the true prophetic word become a consuming fire, ver. 14 (comp. xxiii. 29), and that

Yahvé and said "not that! | neither will evil come upon us, nor shall we see sword and famine! || but let the prophets become wind, let the speaking perish in them! | *thus* may it happen to them!" || —Wherefore thus saith Yahvé the God of Hosts: Because ye speak this word, behold I make my words in thy mouth a fire, and this people wood-chips which it shall devour: || Behold I bring upon you a nation from afar, house Israel! saith Yahvé, | a nation that is indestructible, a nation that is from of old, | a nation whose tongue thou knowest not and hearest not what it speaketh, || whose quiver is like an open grave, | who are all heroes: || —it consumeth thine harvest and thy bread, consumeth thy sons and daughters, | consumeth thy flocks and thine herds, consumeth thy vine and thy fig-tree, | shattereth thy defenced cities, wherein thou trustest, with the sword. || (Still neither in those days, saith Yahvé, | will I make a full end with you!) ||

## 3.

And when ye then say: "wherefore hath Yahvé our God done unto us all this?" say thus to them: Just as ye forsook me and served strange gods in your land, | so shall ye serve  
20 strangers in a land that is not yours! || —Announce this in the house Yaqob, | and proclaim it in Yuda, saying: || Hear now this ye senseless and heartless people, | that have eyes and see not, have ears and hear not: || me will ye not fear, saith Yahvé, or not tremble before me? | I who placed sand as

wonderful northern nation, that indestructible ancient nation, speaking a barbaric language, valiant, and armed with deadly bows, must come to annihilate all thy supplies and false resources! ver. 15-18. With שְׁרֹרֶת, ver. 10, comp. the Aram. *shērūrō*, Jon. iv. 6, and the Arab. *surūr* or *masarraḥ*,

*blossom-points*. The expression, *thus may it happen to them*, ver. 13, is the same as Amos iv. 12, see Vol. I. p. 175. The serious reply to this long array of impious speeches against the true prophets, and in the end their God, is as overwhelming as in the similar instance Isa. xxx. 12.

3. The worship of strange gods is sufficient to account for the nation's exile into a strange land, ver. 19, after Gen. xv. 13. O what strange folly, thus to fall away from the only true God, who besides sustaining mankind keeps inviolable the great laws of the universe! vv. 20-22, comp. iv. 22. But this people has

now become so rebellious and stubborn, resolving not to remember the true fear of him who still every moment and every year must be its benefactor by his firm observance of the order of nature to which he had once sworn (Gen. viii. 20-22), vv. 23, 24: so that it is only its own fault if this order is now



a bound for the sea, an eternal confine and it passed not beyond it, | and they toss themselves but avail nothing,—and its waves roar but pass not beyond it. || —But this people had a stubborn and rebellious heart, | they turned away and went, || and never said in their heart “let us now fear Yahvé our God, who giveth us rain both early and late in its time, | keepeth  
25 toward us the oath concerning the harvest seasons!” || Your transgressions have disturbed these, | and your sins have withholden the good from you. ||

## 4.

For among my people are found wicked men: | they lie in wait as fowlers crouch, they place instruments of death men they catch; || as a cage full of birds, so their houses are full of deceit: | therefore do they wax great and rich, || get fat and get fleshy, swell over also with evil things, | right they never judge, the right of the orphan—that they might establish that! | and the cause of the helpless they never decide. ||  
30 Shall I not visit for such things, saith Yahvé, | or on such a nation shall not my soul take revenge? || —A terrible and horrible thing hath happened in the land, || the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests go with them, and my people like it so: | but what will ye do at the end thereof? ||

broken by the angry Yahvé, ver. 25, comp. iii. 3, and at greater length ch. xiv. xv. The words regarding the sea and its shores appear quite like an echo

of Job xxxviii. 11; and those regarding the oath, ver. 24, have likewise the ring of a quotation from an older passage.

4. Lastly, it cannot be denied that in the nation which ought to be quite pure there are unrighteous people even in matters of social life; as insidiously as fowlers crouch (שָׁחַ = שָׁח, Ps. x. 10), they lie in wait, place instruments of destruction, and catch—men! Yea, it may be said, that by their deceit they fill their houses with booty as if the houses were the cage of a fowler! vv. 26, 27 *a*. By such injustice they become, it is true, great and rich, fat and well fed, but then swell over by their very power into evil things once more, and have no longer any concern

at all for any law or justice; shall that remain unpunished? vv. 27 *b*—29. Terrible things have been done, prophets have become false teachers, the priests following their example, and the nation pleased with it: but what will ye do at the end thereof, when the divine judgment comes? From Isa. x. 3, Amos viii. 10. The verb רָדָה with עַל is exactly like the frequent Syriac *rēdo b'ūrchō*, to imitate. עֲשֵׂת, ver. 28, meaning primarily to shine, to be shining with fat, denotes secondarily, like the corresponding Arabic *ghaththa* and *ghyth*, to become fat; then to

form for oneself a picture = to think.  
 עָבַר as Ps. lxxiii. 7, construed here  
 like words denoting *to be full*, acc.  
 § 281 b, like חָלַק also Hab. i. 11.

With regard to the syntax of וַיַּעֲלֶיחוּ  
 with the *Vav consec.* and after the nega-  
 tive clause, see § 351 a.

#### IV. *The Conclusion.*

##### Ch. vi.

Therefore flee, then, for the approach of the Northern enemy is unalterably determined by Yahvé, everything will be carried to extremity! vv. 1-8. No mercy! The prophet's endeavours to ward off the threatened calamities by his exhortations were in vain, vv. 9-15; since the nation has neither of itself nor at the call of the prophet mended its ways, it must now in spite of its rich external sacrifices fall by that enemy, vv. 16-23; already the proximity of the punishment is observable, and the prophet, who has now finished his trial of the nation, cannot alter any part of it! vv. 24-30.

##### VI.

##### 1.

- 1 Flee ye sons of Benjamin from the midst of Jerusalem, and in *Soundham*\* sound the trumpet, and upon the Vineyard-house set up the high standard, | for evil looketh from the North and great crashing! || The beautiful and the spoiled woman—I mean the daughter of Ssion—|| unto her come shepherds with their flocks, | pitch round about her tents, feed each one his portion: || “consecrate against her war, arise and let us attack at noon!” | “woe unto us that the day declineth, that the evening shadows are stretched out;”—||
- 5 “arise and let us attack in the night and destroy her citadels!” || —For thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: “Cut down the timber and fling up against Jerusalem a rampart! | that city—it is proved that only wrong dwelleth in her; || as a fountain maketh its waters flow, so she her wickedness, | cruelty and violence is heard in her before me perpetually, calamity and wounds, || O take warning Jerusalem, lest my soul be

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\* Properly, *Theqóá*.

severed from thee, | lest I make thee a waste, an uninhabitable land!" ||

2.

Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: Let there be a gleanings as of the vine on the remnant of Israel: | put again thine hand as a  
10 vintager to the shoots; || —To whom shall I speak and adjure that they may hear it? | surely their ear is uncircumcised, that they cannot attend; | yea Yahvé's word became unto them a scorn, they like it not! || And with the heat of Yahvé am I full, am weary of sustaining and restraining it: | "pour it upon the child in the street, and upon the circle of youths together! | yea even husband as well as wife are taken captive, the aged man with him that is full of days; || and their houses

1. Yéremyá exhorts his own countrymen, the people of Benjamin, who dwell furthest north, to flee quickly towards the south, into the desert, and there to assemble; the Vineyardhouse, Bāthkérém, was situated probably close by Theqóá (Amos i. 1) in the desert; comp. *Hist. of Israel*, III. 256 (III. p. 351). Jerusalem, the enervated city, will be besieged by a host of nomadic nations, who forthwith, even at hot noontide, and also when it should be too late in the day, agree to attack it in the following night! vv. 2-5, comp. the similar description of the Assyrian advance, Isa. x. 28-32: but as far as our description differs from the latter it is observable that in the present case a purely nomadic people is intended.—For, which is the most important point, Yahvé himself commands the siege of

the city (this siege commencing with the felling of the trees round the city, which was felt to be a great calamity, and in contravention of the law of Deuteronomium, comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 315 (271)), that city concerning which it has been sufficiently ascertained by tests and enquiry that there is nothing in it anywhere but wrong, and which incessantly sends forth its wickedness as from an unfailing spring, and wherein open violence and disorder is constantly appearing, vv. 6, 7: O take warning, lest the love of Yahvé, which cleaves to thee as by his soul, be irremediably torn from thee like one limb from another! ver. 8. The construction of *הִפְקֵד*, ver. 6, is acc. § 336 b, the whole of the subsequent clause with its subject and predicate being subordinated to this neuter.

2. Yahvé will have no further pity: even the remnant shall again pass through the fire, Zech. xiii. 9, no gleanings shall be left on that delicate vine! ver. 9 (*סלסלות* must be the same as *זלזל*, Isa. xviii. 5) according to v. 10. The prophet would gladly exhort, adjure, that that might

not happen: but the nation will not hear him, it being generally hardened against the divine work, ver. 10; and besides he is himself at last too full of the fire of divine anger and can no longer quietly sustain and restrain it: too mightily he hears Yahvé himself calling to him, that he may let it pour itself

pass over to others, fields and wives together, | because I stretch out my hand over the inhabitants of the land," saith Yahvé. || —For from the least unto the greatest everyone of them seeketh gain, | and from the prophet unto the priest everyone practiseth deceit; || and would patch up the wounds of my people slightly, saying "health, health!" | but there is no health, || would blush that they had practised abomination, | but neither do they blush, neither do they know shame; | —therefore will they fall amongst those that fall, at the time of their visitation stumble! saith Yahvé. ||

## 3.

Thus saith Yahvé: tread ye upon ways and see and enquire for the eternal paths! | whichever is the best way upon that go ye, thus ye find rest for your soul!" | but they said "we will not go!" || and continually I set up for you watchmen "attend to the voice of the trumpet!" | but they said "we will not

freely over all, all are appointed to exile and divine punishment! vv. 11, 12. The moral corruption is too universal, and the worst feature of the case is that people desire to heal the wounds of the kingdom so slightly, under the false impression that health is there, and pretend to feel shame at the abominations practised, while in reality they are incapable of true shame: accordingly the lot of the magnates and prophets is also mournful! (from Isa. x. 4), vv. 13-15. רָפְאָה ver. 14 and הִכְבִּישׁ are inchoatives acc. § 120 d, 122 c. After the inf. לְהַכְבִּיל ver. 11, וּכְבִּלּוֹא must be inserted, as may be gathered from the perverse translation of the LXX. καὶ συvertέ-λιστα αὐτούς: the following pour it must be the voice of Yahvé himself

which the prophet hears with such overwhelming force. Thus שְׁפֹךְ as the imperative may be correct; already Yéremyá presents that characteristic of his vocation which appears more fully in ch. xiv. Further פְּקֻדָּתָם must be read instead of פְּקֻדֹתֵי, ver. 15, where the *perf.* is unexpected, acc. viii. 12; x. 15; xi. 23; xxiii. 12; xlv. 21; xlviii. 44, as well as הָרָה—xlix. 8: if perhaps the other reading is the original one in l. 31, the emendation still remains necessary in this passage. The only possible way of preserving the *perf.* would be if עַת or בְּעַת had the force of an Arabic *idhā* with a *perf.* immediately following, or of our *when* § 355 b: this, however, we have not yet been able to substantiate.

3. Which are the eternal and best ways upon which man may walk together with God, they might have known by the test of their own experience: but they would not make the experiment, ver. 16; and to the prophets, the watch-

men of the future, and their call to observe the seriousness of the present time, to hear the trumpet of approaching war (iv. 5, 19, 21; vi. 1) they will not be more attentive, ver. 17; accordingly all the nations of the earth must hear



attend!" || Therefore hear ye nations, | and know thou community what is coming, || hear O earth: behold I bring evil upon this people as the fruit of their thoughts, | because they did not attend to my words and my instruction—they despised  
 20 it.—What is this to me that incense cometh from Sheba, and the best cinnamon from the furthest country? | your best offerings are not acceptable, and your sacrifices are not pleasant to me. || Therefore thus saith Yahvé: behold I cause stumblingblocks to come unto this people, that its fathers and sons together stumble thereon, neighbour and friend, and perish! || Thus saith Yahvé: "Behold a nation cometh from the North country, | and a great people is in motion from the extreme ends of the earth; || it holdeth bow and lance, is cruel and without pity, | people whose voice roareth like the sea, and who ride upon horses, | arrayed as a man for war against thee thou daughter of Ssion! ||

## 4.

"We heard his report, our hands hang down, | anguish hath seized us, trembling like as the woman in travail:" || Go not forth\* into the field and walk not in the way, | for the sword hath the enemy, horror on every side. || Thou daughter

what punishment is announced against Jerusalem for such indifference (and the community would do well to acknowledge that God that works amongst the Heathen also!) vv. 18, 19. The costly sacrifices which the nation brings with ignorant effort will not avail to alter the displeasure of Yahvé, ver. 20: on the contrary, on that very account Yahvé will cast before it his stumblingblocks by means of which all must fall, ver. 21, comp. ver. 15, namely the invincible and terrible enemies, vv. 22,

23, comp. v. 15, 16. As therefore the opening of this strophe, ver. 16, was occasioned by the figure of *stumbling* upon dangerous and fatal ways at the end of the previous one, ver. 15, the same figure occurs here again towards the end, ver. 21. Ver. 18 בם would have to be taken with the meaning indicated above; כן in any case fits into the context more easily, especially as it is repeated ver. 22; and תבוא, ver. 20, must be taken as a further relative clause.

4. The community in Jerusalem will then feel the greatest alarm at the simple report of the approach of the enemy, ver. 24 (comp. the more detailed description, iv. 19-21): but it cannot

receive a comforting word from the prophet, vv. 27, 28 (from Amos viii. 10), comp. iv. 8. The chief business that had been assigned to the prophet, as a wise tester of metals to examine what

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\* O Jerusalem.

of my people, gird on sackcloth and wallow in ashes, | mourning for an only one appoint thee, most bitter lamentation : | for suddenly will the spoiler come upon us. || —As a trier have I set thee in my nation, as a separator, | that thou shouldst know and try their way. || They are all the bad of the bad, dealers in slander, brass and iron, | they are all instruments of death ; || the bellows have blown from their flames lead, | in vain hath been continual melting, yet the wicked have not been separated. || Rejected silver they are called, | because Yahvé hath rejected them. ||

ways the nation had taken according to the opening of the previous strophe, ver. 16, is finished, and unfortunately his testing science has shown that all are base and evil, there is no precious metal to separate but mere brass and iron, lead : and unhappily they are not only the most unguenuine (comp. סוּרִי ii. 21), but just as the false metals are frequently taken for making all kinds of *instruments of death* (משחית as in v. 26), so they are also instruments to destroy innocent men, e.g. the prophets, with their black slander, as had been already bitterly said at the end of the fourth strophe, iv. 26-31. However active the bellows may be in the fire of their trial, they only blow out (נִזְרָה Arab. *nakhara*) lead, in vain are they continuously (acc. § 280 b) melted—the wicked do not separate themselves as precious metal, but remain as base

metal in the fire, the entire community is in the view of Yahvé rejected, bad silver! vv. 27-30. מִשְׁחִיתִים, ver. 28, appears here in an entirely different connexion from that of Isa. i. 4. The punctuation מִבְּצָר, ver. 27, in writing which the Massōra were thinking of the different figure of i. 18, yields no fitting sense: read מִבְּצָר *refiner* (of metals), since the word בָּצַר denotes properly to separate, as בָּצַר Job xxii. 24, 25, the separated, *fine* piece of precious metal. The reading of the *K'thîb* מֵאֶשְׁתָּם may very well mean *from their fires*, i.e. flames; the Q'ri would signify *from fire most perfect lead*, which would not be suitable here, if for no other reason, because everything here is immediately referred to *them*. The whole is simply an expansion of Isa. i. 22.

### 3. The Temple.

#### Ch. vii.-x.

A public festival in the Temple at the beginning of the reign of Yoyaqîm presented to the prophet an occasion to proclaim similar truths, and to this festival the inhabitants of the country districts of Yuda came in great numbers. The particulars are narrated, ch. xxvi. 1-29. Since the restoration of the ancient law under Yosiá, the wise and learned prided them-

selves not a little on their learning, viii. 8 ; ix. 22. Eye-serving prophets and authors continued to mislead the people with the delusive assertion, that the ancient Temple of Jerusalem was the indestructible bulwark of the community, that neither exile nor any other great convulsion or destruction of the kingdom was to be feared ; and greedy priests were quite ready to support the false prophets, in order to retain their public reputation and to obtain abundance of rich offerings from the people, vii. 4, 21 ; viii. 8, 11 ; ix. 11 ; whilst at the same time they allowed all manner of superstitious and heathen customs to be observed again even in the Temple itself under Yoyaqîm, just as they had been under Manasseh, vii. 30, 31 ; and notwithstanding that the whole moral basis of the kingdom and the people was being daily more and more undermined, and there appeared nowhere a sign of commencing reform or holiness. viii. 4 sq. ; ix. 1-8. Just at that time the people came into the Temple to a kind of public fast, as the times shortly after Yosia's death were very calamitous, vii. 10 : but there was no longer any trace of true humiliation and repentance. Yéremyá was therefore all the more compelled to proclaim once more the pure divine truths in the hearing of the multitude that had come together from the country to the Temple, as if he would ascertain whether the truths which the capital had hitherto rejected could be received by the whole land on such a solemn occasion. The whole piece is accordingly laid out with a view to further elucidation and exposition. The discourse commences with the Temple merely for the purpose of connecting a number of sacred considerations with this sacred object. Neither would it be seemly simply to proclaim threats and punishment in the hearing of, for the most part, a new audience : the thought of the true sanctuary of Israel would also impose the same restraint. The description of the eternal hope, therefore, cannot be, in this case at least, entirely absent. Accordingly, though the prophet proclaims aloud that neither the Temple nor any other external help or defence can avail, that, on the contrary,

destruction in the immediate future threatens the Temple, dissolution the state, and exile the people ; he also points to the only indestructible hope for the community, and concludes by giving this community that share of faith in this hope which his spirit desires and anticipates. We see from ch. xxvi. 1-19, what an important effect this discourse produced at the time.

The great discourse, therefore, falls into three sections. Beginning at first with the Temple, it shows the glaring contradiction that exists between the proud trust of the nation in the Temple and the grounds of it, and anticipates the possibility, indeed the necessity, of the destruction of this sanctuary which has been so long desecrated through the nation's own fault ; the consideration both of the history and fortunes of similar and older sanctuaries, and of the matter itself, conducts to this anticipation ! vii. 2—viii. 3 in four strophes. The discourse then abandons its immediate occasion and the mention of the Temple, and goes on to more general consideration, in order to establish both the accusation against the existing nation and also its punishment, since the necessity of a severe chastisement is only too evident ; in doing this it makes pointed reference to the Wise and authors who mislead the ignorant people, viii. 4-ix. 25, in five strophes, until at last the basis and possibility of the true prosperity and the hope of the genuine community are unfolded, ch. x, in three strophes.

It is clear, from the allusions to the flight into fortified places, viii. 14 ; x. 17, compared with the historical instance that is referred to below, xxxv. 11, that this piece was published just at the time when the Chaldean armies for the first time overran the whole champaign country and threatened Jerusalem. Inasmuch, therefore, as Yéremyá had published his former book a considerable time before this, it is not surprising that he repeats in this a good many thoughts and phrases which had appeared in that : in fact, it was only now that much that he had said in his former book began to be fulfilled.



Neither is there any ground for surprise that the complexion of the style is somewhat different in the two strophes in which the prophet appears for the first time more in the character of a simple teacher, x. 1-16 : didactic language is of another kind than that of pure prophecy, and the various kinds of style had been at that time long fully formed in Israel. At the same time, the peculiar diction of this prophet may be easily perceived in certain turns and words, comp. אִתָּם, ver. 5, for אִתָּם; חֲכִיל, ver. 10, with ii. 13; vi. 11; בָּעֵר, vv. 8, 14, with ver. 21; to this must be added the fact that these two strophes also fit perfectly well into the context. But the description of the folly of idolatry which they supply is also quite new, and clearly serves as a model for the much more elaborate ones, "Isa." xl. 19-24; xli. 7; xliv. 8-20; xlv. 5-7; and he only does biblical science a poor service who in our day denies that this piece, as well as the book of Ssephanya, was used by the prophets at the end of the Chaldean period as original prototypes. Even the later prophet, ch. l., li., found all these words in our piece, and this also may serve as a proof that they are really from Yéremyá. It is indeed just possible that Yéremyá did not publish these two strophes before the second edition of the year 586 : still the following pieces also show exactly similar transitions, xii. 13 sq.; xvi. 14 sq.

## VII.

1 The word which came to Yéremyá from Yahvé in this wise :

I. *The Visitation of the Temple.*

## Ch. vii. 2—viii. 3.

After the glaring contradiction between the ancient promise concerning the Temple and the present ideas and actions of the people with respect to it has been shown in a few powerful words, vv. 2-11, the warning example of the rejection of the ancient sanctuary at Shiloh is forcibly presented, vv. 12-20,

and the erroneous notion that external sacrifices suffice thoroughly exposed, vv. 21-28: whence it necessarily follows what evil consequences must attend the desecration of all holy things which is still going on, vv. 29—viii. 3.

## 1.

Stand in the gate of the house of Yahvé, and proclaim there this word and say: | Hear Yahvé's word ye of all Yuda, ye who come into these gates to do homage unto Yahvé! || thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: Make good your ways and deeds: | then I cause you to dwell in this place! || Trust not yourselves to the lying words: | "the Temple of Yahvé the  
5 Temple of Yahvé the Temple of Yahvé is this!" || rather if ye really make good your ways and deeds, | if ye really execute justice between each other, || oppress not the sojourner the fatherless and widow and shed not innocent blood in this place | and go not after strange gods—to your own hurt: || then I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, | for ever and ever. || —Behold ye trust yourselves to the lying words, | —to gain nothing! || What? steal and murder and commit adultery and swear falsely and burn incense to the Baal, | and go after other gods which ye knew  
10 not: — || and ye come then and stand before me in this house whereupon my name is called and say "save us!" | —to do all these abominations? || a den of thieves then hath this house whereupon my name is called become in your eyes? | —also I have indeed seen it! saith Yahvé. ||

1. The true promise of ancient times, as it is so often repeated, *e.g.* in the Book of Deuteronomy, is this: repose and peace, a secure and happy existence in the sacred land with the Temple as its strong centre (vv. 7, 15), will be the consequence of good conduct, ver. 3; the fulfilment of this promise cannot be the result of a blind trust in the Temple as the sanctuary which it is thought Yahvé must necessarily protect, as false prophets misleadingly say to the people, but a faithful observance of all divine eternal laws can alone

secure it, vv. 4-7.—But now—in their folly they nevertheless trust to the false and useless promises of the false prophets, ver. 8; is it possible, then, to commit all possible crimes, and at the same time, as these people do, impudently appear in the Temple before Yahvé with a petition for salvation—with the expectation, perhaps, that when they have been saved they may once more be able to continue all such abominations? vv. 9, 10. Do they then consider the Temple a den of thieves?—very well, Yahvé on his part has also

## 2.

- For go now to my place which was at Shilo, where I caused my name to dwell formerly, | and see what I have done to it for the wickedness of my people Israel! || And now because ye have done all these deeds, saith Yahvé, | and I spoke to you speaking earnestly but ye heard not, and called you and ye answered not: || therefore I do to this house whereupon my name is called, upon which ye trust, and to the place which I  
 15 gave you and your fathers | just as I did to Shilo, || and cast you forth from my face; | just as I cast forth all your brethren, the whole seed of Ephráim. || —But pray not thou for this people, and lift not up for them lamentation and prayer, neither press upon me: | for in no case do I hear thee! || seest thou then not what they do in Jerusalem's streets and in Yuda's cities? || —the sons glean pieces of wood and the fathers kindle the fire and the women knead the dough | —to bake cakes to the Queen of Heaven and to pour libations to other gods,—in order thus to vex me! || —Me will they vex, saith  
 20 Yahvé, | not themselves, in order that their countenance may blush? || Therefore thus saith Lord Yahvé: behold my wrath and fury will be poured upon this place, || over the men and over the cattle, and over the trees of the field and over the fruits of the land, and burneth them unquenchably! ||

taken a glance at their conduct, and will bear the miserable spectacle no longer! ver. 11, comp. Zech. ix. 8, which is then further shown in the following strophes, particularly in the last one. With regard to **הָפִיָּה**, ver. 4, comp. § 172 b, and **אֵל**, ver. 6, § 320 a. Instead of **נִצְלָנוּ**, *we are saved*, ver.

10, it is better to read **נִצְלָנוּ** (Ezek. xiv. 14), because they came into the Temple, particularly in those troubled times, to seek help, comp. viii. 4 sq. even if the *perf.* were treated as a *pre-cative*, acc. § 323 b, it would be unsuitable. Ver. 9 follows Hos. iv. 2, the infinitive absolutes as iii. 1.

2. A comparison as in ch. iii. The ancient sanctuary of Shilô in the Northern kingdom continued to be of importance as late as the time of Samûel, but in Yéremyá's time it had been disused for centuries, and had long lost all its earlier sacredness, 1 Sam. ch. iv. sq., comp. *History of Israel*, II. 413 sq. (II. p. 582 sq.). The fate which befel Shilô, and subsequently the entire

Northern kingdom, can and must at last overtake Jerusalem and Yuda, since they gave ear to no warnings, vv. 12-15. The first, **כָּל**, ver. 15, which the LXX omit, forms the proper antithesis to Shilô only, and its repetition in the following member is not surprising in Yéremyá.—The prophet is the less able to present an intercessory prayer in the Temple for the people that are stream-

## 3.

Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God : | put your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat them as flesh ! || For I spake not with your fathers nor gave them command, when I led them out of the land of Egypt, | concerning matters of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, || but only this word commanded I them, "hear my voice, that I may be God to you and ye be my people, | and walk in every way which I commend to you, that it may go well with you !" || but they hearkened not and inclined not their ear, and walked in the counsels in the stubbornness of their wicked heart, | and became people of  
 25 backwards, not of forwards. || From the day when your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day | I sent to you all my servants the prophets, daily sending them most earnestly : || but they hearkened not unto me nor inclined their ear, | but they hardened their neck, did worse than their fathers ; || and speakest thou to them all these words, they will not hearken unto thee, | callest thou to them, they will not answer thee. || Say then unto them : "this is the nation that never hearkened unto the voice of Yahvé its God, nor received correction ;— | faithfulness is perished and vanished from their mouth !" ||

ing to it, in proportion as they are all sedulously bent on serving the idols, *e.g.*, baking sacrificial cakes (Hos. iii. 1) for the Queen of Heaven (comp. viii. 2)—one would say for the purpose of vexing Yahvé, if they would not on the contrary be themselves vexed some day by such abominations, beholding with shame their consequences, as must accordingly happen, vv. 16-19. The

3. If ye think of serving me by means of many offerings in the Temple, ye greatly err : take all kinds of offerings, the fat burnt offerings (those animals of which men are by the law not allowed to eat) as well as the common sacrificial animals, and eat them all *as flesh*, *i.e.*, unroasted, with your own teeth, without their being burnt upon the altar ! I permit you to eat

great overwhelming punishment accordingly shall come, ver. 20, a further extension of Hos. iv. 3. With regard to the idolatries mentioned here, which had become thoroughly established in Yuda only in the days of Manasseh, comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 208, (III. p. 717, 718), and with regard to מִלְכֶּת § 187 c.

them all up ! ver. 21. For if the matter is looked at in the light of historical law it is well known that in the Pentateuch, in the strict sense, such offerings are not demanded (for the few cases in which the Pentateuch speaks not of the good institution of voluntary offerings, but of the necessary offerings of individuals, do not at all concern us here where only voluntary



## 4.

30 Cut off [O Ssion] thy crown and cast it away, and raise upon the heights lamentation! | for Yahvé hath rejected and abandoned the generation of his wrath. || Because the sons of Yuda did what is evil in mine eyes saith Yahvé, | set their abominations in the house over which my name is called—to pollute it, || and built the high-altars of the place-of-burning which are in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters in the fire, | which I did not command nor come into my mind: || therefore behold days come, saith Yahvé, when men will no more be saying “the place-of-burning” nor “valley of Ben-Hinnom” but the “valley of slaughter,” | and bury in the place-of-burning for want of room; || the dead bodies of this people will be meat for the fowls of heaven and

offerings on a magnificent scale are intended), but other indispensable services of God, such as may be rendered by any one at any time, and which also have the eternal promises of his blessing, vv. 22, 23: but, unhappily, the divine commandments, considered generally, were uttered in vain, ver. 24; in fact, from that early time until the present, the condition of the people, notwithstanding all the prophetic warnings, has not generally improved, so that now also Yéremyá will certainly again in vain address them, and call

4. Thus the final punishment is unavoidable, Ssion may cast away its ornament of hair, and in solitude lament under the open heaven! ver. 29, comp. ix. 9; Isa. iii. 26. Because, in addition to many other transgressions which have never been mentioned in the divine law, they desecrate the Temple

them to reform, and there is nothing left for him but to hold up before them briefly the picture of their own stubbornness and unfaithfulness, vv. 25-28. Since בֶּשֶׂר, ver. 21, is not the same as *sacred*, i.e. consecrated *flesh*, xi. 15, we must in this case remember the usage referred to, Vol. I. p. 277, which might at least be present to the prophet's mind as possible. Ver. 24, בְּמוֹעֲצוֹת, although left in the *stat. abs.*, is still more nearly defined by the following, לִבָּם הָרַע, comp. § 289 c. On יוֹם ver. 25, see my note on Ps. xiii. 3.\*

by setting up their idols (their abominations) in it (acc. 2 Kings xxi. 4, 5; xxiv. 3), and continue within the fortifications of Jerusalem, in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, to present the horrible sacrifices of children burnt alive (2 Kings xxi. 6), building a number of heights, or altars, for this purpose around the

\* The note referred to is as follows:—“The word יוֹם is not here used in opposition to night, but just as our phrase *day and night* = every day and every night, the word *day* alone may mean *constantly, daily*, exactly as in the Lat. *diu* is connected with *dies*. The word יוֹם has this force in Ezek. xxx. 16; Jer. vii. 25. The addition of the Codex Alexandrinus καὶ νυκτός is therefore incorrect.”—Tr.

the beast of the earth, with none to scare them away, || and I destroy from Yuda's cities and from Jerusalem's streets | the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, | because the land becometh  
 viii. desolate. || In that time, saith Yahvé, men will bring the bones  
 1 of the kings of Yuda and those of his princes, | those of the priests and those of the prophets and those of the citizens of Jerusalem out of their graves, || and expose them to the sun and the moon and the whole Host of heaven, | whom they loved and whom they served, and after whom they walked whom they sought and to whom they did homage : | they will not be again entombed nor buried, dung upon the face of the earth will they become ; || and death is preferable to life to all the residue that remain of this wicked generation, | in all the places whither I have driven them, saith Yahvé of Hosts. ||

shocking place of burning (Tóphet, Isa. xxx. 33, from תַּף = שָׁב, Job xviii. 5, Arab. *shahaba*, to burn), the valley where they thoughtlessly practised such abominations shall in the future bear the name *valley of slaughter* (comp., on the other hand, iii. 16, 17), because a great battle with their enemies and a defeat will take place there ; and the fair valley will be made into a gloomy burying-place, although from the vast number of the dead in that utterly mournful time, not even all the dead bodies will be able to be buried, vv. 30-34 ; yea, even the bones of those who had been long buried, the hostile conquerors will fling out of their costly sepulchres again (from greed of booty, revenge, etc.)—in order that the sun and all the stars may see those publicly lying in their shame, who in their lifetime slavishly did them homage (vii. 18), and who are not even in death protected by them ! viii. 1, 2 ; yea, then

even the few who are left alive will everywhere, wherever they are scattered, prefer at once to die, ver. 3, where with the LXX the last הַנְּשָׂאִים should be erased as here disturbing. When Yéremyá refers here so emphatically to the idolatrous abominations in the Temple itself and in the Hinnom valley, which had been removed since Yosia's reform, he does this manifestly simply for the reason that at that time, after the accession of the new king, Yoyaqím, at Jerusalem, their revival was seriously considered, and probably they had been already partially restored, a fact which is referred to elsewhere in Yéremyá's history. When he also so emphatically asserts, ver. 34, that it never came into Yahvé's mind to justify such idolatrous rites, it is evident that there were at that time teachers and authors who endeavoured to prove the contrary, comp. viii. 8 sq.

II.—*The Accusation and the Punishment.*

## CH. VIII. 4—IX. 25.

If this occasion is used for a further glance at the whole conduct of all sections of the nation, sufficient reason is everywhere discerned for accusation and lamentation, although no lamentation can avail to avert the punishment. The endless impenitence of the nation, notwithstanding its vain pretence of penitence, together with the false wisdom of its philosophers and savants, is of itself a sufficient ground for punishment, vv. 4-13, for that great and truly divine punishment which men will vainly hasten to escape, vv. 14-23, and then, if the life of the citizens is looked at, what endless insincerity and intrigue in all relations! ix. 1-8: true wisdom and prophecy ought to show itself in foresight of the necessary consequences of such perversities, ix. 9-17, the true boast of the Wise and of all those who boast of any special distinction ought to approve itself in the timely and genuine knowledge of Yahvé, but, as everything is at present, the most severe divine punishment must fall upon all nations, Heathen and Israelites! ix. 18-25. Of these five strophes, therefore, the first and the third particularly supply the accusations of Yahvé against all sections of the people, the others describe rather the unfolding of the punishments.

## 1.

Say then unto them: Thus saith Yahvé: do men fall and not rise again? | do they turn round and not turn round? ||  
 5 Wherefore did this people of Jerusalem practise incessant apostasy? | did they hold fast to deceit, did they refuse to return? || I hearkened and heard—not honestly do they speak, not one repenteth of his wickedness thinking “what have I done?” | every one turneth round—into his delights, like a rushing horse into the battle! || Also the stork in the heaven knoweth its set times, and turtle and swallow and crane keep the time of their coming home: | but my people know not

Yahvé's judgment! || —How can ye say "we are wise, and Yahvé's law is with us!" | but behold—unto a lie the lying stylus of the authors hath made it; || the Wise will blush, be confounded and taken: | behold—the word of Yahvé they  
 10 despised, and what kind of wisdom have they? || —Therefore will I give their wives unto others, their fields unto the new inheritors, | for from the least unto the greatest every one of them seeketh gain, and from the prophet unto the priest every one practiseth deceit; || and they wished to heal the wounds of my people slightly, saying "Health, health!" | but there is no health, || would blush that they had practised abomination: | but neither did they blush, neither do they know shame; | — therefore will they fall amongst them that fall, at the time of their visitation stumble, saith Yahvé. || Sweeping I will sweep them away, saith Yahvé; | no grapes are on the vine and no figs on the fig-tree and the leaf is withered, | and I gave unto them what they transgress. ||

1. It is a rule that holds elsewhere that if a man falls he rises again, if a man returns he really returns and does not stop midway; but this nation does not rise again though it has fallen, pretends to return to Yahvé yet does not really do so, on the contrary, appears to have finally fallen away from him, vv. 4, 5, an opening that recalls iii. 1, 10; on the construction of הָעַם in the *stat. abs.* instead of the *stat. constr.* see § 290 *e*. In vain did Yahvé (comp. similarly "Isa." lxxv. 1 *sq.*), like a loving father, look for the confession of their repentance: they may return, but it is only to rush as blindly into their own luts as the horse into the battle, Job. xxxix. 25, and are slower to recognize their eternal obligations towards their lord than irrational animals their times, vv. 6, 7; מִרְצָח formed as xxii. 17; xxiii. 10 from רָצַח acc. § 161 *a*.—It is true, they think they know everything, there is a host of philosophers and savants amongst them who claim to understand

Yahvé's law: but the lying stylus of the authors even in handling the law of Yahvé has misrepresented and falsified it, making it a lie, and the end of these quacks will be disgraceful, vv. 8, 9, comp. Isa. xix. 11. Because the moral corruption is so general, severe punishment must follow by the conquest of the country, vv. 10-12, repeated from vi. 12-15, comp. also ver. 9 with vi. 10; Yahvé will hurry them away because they are without fruit and verdure (from Seph. i. 2 and Mic. vii. 1) and seem only to have received the ancient divine laws in order to transgress them, ver. 13. The LXX omitted with apparent justice the words repeated from vi. 12-15, but their omission of the last words of ver. 13 is not defensible, since they are quite suitable and finish the strophe with brevity and force: for they bring back the discussion to the opening thought vv. 4, 5, and their meaning is quite clear from §§. 333 *b*, 172 *b*.



## 2.

“For what do we sit still? assemble yourselves and let us go into the defenced cities, and there perish! | for Yahvé our God intendeth to destroy us and gave us poisoned water to drink, because we have sinned against Yahvé.” || To wait for salvation—but there is no good, | for the time of recovery—and behold mortal terror! || from Dan is heard the snorting of his horses, with the loud neighing of his stallions the whole earth trembled, | and they came and devoured the land and its fulness, the city and they who dwell therein. || For behold I send upon you cerast-serpents, that cannot be charmed: | they will bite you! saith Yahvé. || —O what could comfort me against sorrow! | I feel my heart is sick! || behold loud is the cry of the daughter of my people from the land afar off: “is “Yahvé not in Ssion, or her king not in her?” | —“ “Why have they vexed me with their images, with their strange  
 20 Gods?” ” || The harvest is past, the summer is gone; | but we are not saved! || for the breaking in pieces of the daughter of my people am I broken in pieces, | I mourn, horror hath seized me. || Is there no balm in Gilead, or no physician there? | for wherefore is the bandage of the daughter of my people not laid on? || —O that my head had water and mine eyes a fountain of tears, | that I might weep day and night over the slain of the daughter of my people! ||

2. And as a fact already the prophet hears many voices in consultation, as they in their despair are desiring to flee at last into the fortresses from the wrath of Yahvé, that they may snatch a little longer life, to perish there if they must perish, ver. 14 (iv. 5): but the deliverance hoped for in this form is not granted, on the contrary, the neighing of mighty battle-loving horses is heard from the North, iv. 15, and the arrival of the barbarians who spare nothing, who are like serpents that are proof against the charmer, which Yahvé himself sends into the land (acc. Num. xxi. 6; Deut. vii. 20), vv. 15-17. Sunk in the profoundest

sorrow, the prophet therefore hears further from the earth itself the voice of those who in their lamentation ask whether then Yahvé the ancient God is no longer in Ssion, as a saviour and protector (unlike Mic. iv. 9): but the divine voice can easily justify the withholding of deliverance, vv. 18, 19, all crying for deliverance is in vain since the harvest is past, the great decision has been taken, ver. 20, the prophet falls back into his sorrow, ver. 21, in vain he calls for balsam to soothe the wounds of the kingdom in its fatal sickness, there is nothing left for him but to give way to his feelings in floods of tears, vv. 22, 23.

## 3.

- ix. O that I had in the desert a traveller's lodgment, that I  
 1 might leave my people and go away from them! | for they all  
 are adulterers, an assembly of robbers, || and they bent their  
 tongues as their bows with lies, and not according to truth did  
 they command upon the earth, | but from wickedness to wicked-  
 ness they advanced, and me they know not, saith Yahvé. ||  
 Let every one be on his guard before his neighbour, and to no  
 brother trust ye, | for every brother practiseth Yaqob's intrigue,  
 and every neighbour goeth slandering, || and one deceiveth the  
 other and the truth they speak not, | have accustomed their  
 tongues to speak lies to do evil, are weary of returning: ||  
 5 wrong upon wrong, deceit upon deceit, | they refuse to know  
 me! saith Yahvé. || — Therefore thus saith Yahvé of Hosts:  
 Behold I will melt and try them! | for how should I act before  
 the wickedness of the daughter of my people? || A sharp arrow  
 is their tongue, deceit the words of their mouth; | with his  
 mouth one speaketh peace to another, and in his heart he  
 layeth his intrigue: || should I not visit such things upon them,  
 saith Yahvé, | or on such a nation should not my soul take  
 revenge? ||

3. Inasmuch as the prophet must now describe the hopeless corruption even of the morals of the citizens, he at once gives vent to the wish that instead of being there he were far away from this company of adulterers, robbers, and untrustworthy slanderous men, who do not command upon the earth according to good faith, but go from one wickedness to another without knowing Yahvé! ix. 1, 2 (comp. ver. 7; Ps. lv. 7-9; lxiv. 4, passages that appear to have been in Yĕremyá's mind, but not Ps. xii. 5). All must be exhorted to trust no one (xii. 6; Mic. vii. 5), so full are men now of all kinds of dishonesty, because they are even too weak for genuine conversion and will not know Yahvé! vv. 3-5. Therefore Yahvé will lead them into the most severe temptation: only into temptation, not at once into

complete and final destruction (iv. 27; v. 10), for *how could he do that?* (Hos. xi. 8), however much they deserved it *in the presence of their deceit*, ver. 6: but inasmuch as their heart wholly contradicts their exterior, how should he keep silence? vv. 7, 8, like v. 9, 29. Inasmuch as the force of בָּלֹאָה, ver. 4, is clear from vi. 11; xv. 6; xx. 9, and the arrangement of the members of ver. 5 is unsuitable with the present reading, it is better to connect הַעֲוֹנוֹת with the foregoing infinitive, to read בָּלֹאָהֵי שׁוֹב, comp. v. 3; viii. 5, and to construe הַתָּה בְּתוֹךְ מְרֹמָה מְרֹמָה, Ps. lv. 12. Further, רָעַת has fallen out before בַּת, as may also be seen from vii. 12; the phrase אֵיךְ אֶעֱשֶׂה has in this place another force than in xii. 5 or iii. 19. The word שָׁחַט, ver. 7, which according to

## 4.

- For the mountains let me weep and lift up wailing, and for the pastures of the plain lamentation, because they are silent without any wayfarers and hear the voice of no herd, |
- 10 both bird and beast have flown have departed! || And I make Jerusalem stoneheaps, a resort of jackals, | and Yuda's cities I make a desolation, without inhabitant. || —Who is the wise man that he may understand this, and to whom Yahvé's mouth hath spoken that he may declare it? | wherefore is the land lost, is it silent like the desert without a wayfarer? || Accordingly Yahvé said: because they forsook my doctrine which I set before them, | hearkened not to my voice and walked not in the former, || but walked after the stubbornness of their heart | and the idols which their fathers taught them; || therefore, thus saith Yahve of Hosts Israel's God: Behold I feed them, this people, with wormwood | and give them to
- 15 drink poison-water, || and scatter them among nations whom neither they nor their fathers knew, | and send after them the sword, until I have consumed them. || Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: attend ye and call to the wailing-women that they may come, | and unto the wise-women send ye that they may come, || that they hasten and take up over us wailing, | that our eyes run down with tears and our eyelids pour down water! ||

the context most probably means *sharp*, and is suitably rendered *τιτρώσκουσα* by the LXX, may be compared with the roots of like meaning in Arabic *shahāda* and Chaldee שחן; instead of

דִּבֶּר it is better to read with the LXX דִּבְרֵי פִיָּהֶם, since this emendation is necessary to make the structure of the verse-members symmetrical.

4. Accordingly the prophet is compelled to weep over the desolate silence which now prevails in extensive districts, since Yahvé has fully determined to lay waste the capital and the country, vv. 9, 10. Whoever is truly a Wise man and a Prophet must know that the equally lamentable and marvellous phenomenon of the desolation of the most stirring and populous districts has its origin in the sad fact that men have been serving false gods instead of

Yahvé, vv. 11-13 (after Hosea xiv. 10): hence the overflowing measure of calamity, the dispersion and destruction in the exile, vv. 13, 14 (comp. at the end Amos ix. 1), so that all the professional mourning women may be summoned to the great lamentation, vv. 16, 17. Since נָצְרוּ vv. 9, 11; xlv. 19. can be compared neither with נִתְצַיִן iv. 26 nor הִצִּיחַ iv. 7, and in the chief passage, ver. 9, the signification of silence is most suitable, we may compare the

## 5.

For loud wailing is heard from Ssion : "O how are we laid waste, | mightily ashamed that we left the land, that our dwellings were thrown down!" || Yes, hear ye women Yahvé's word, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, | and teach your daughters the death-wail, each other the lamentation ; || for death climbeth into our windows, cometh into our high-palaces, | to cut off the child from the alley, and the youths from the streets, ||\* and the dead-bodies of men will fall like dung upon the face of the field, | and like a bundle after the harvestman which hath no gatherer. || —Thus saith Yahvé: let no wise man boast of his wisdom, nor the strong man of his strength, | no rich man boast of his wealth: || but of this let him boast that boasteth: that he is prudent and knoweth me ! | because I Yahvé exercise kindness justice and righteousness upon the earth, | for in these things I delight, saith Yahvé. || Behold days come, saith Yahvé, | when I visit every uncircumcised-circumcised man, || Egypt and Yuda, Edóm and the sons of 'Ammon and Môab, and all they that are shorn on their temples who dwell in the desert : | for all the Heathen are uncircumcised, and the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart. ||

Arabic *naṣata*, to be silent ; the meaning to kindle which נָצַת from צַת has elsewhere, is foreign in this connexion; if the

former signification is not accepted, we must connect נָצַת and נָצַת with the Arabic *Ṣadiya*, to thirst.

5. And evermore the prophet hears the wail of those that have been banished from their native land, ver. 18, comp. viii. 19 (*from Ssion* means therefore simply from the Israelites and those led away captive); yes, seriously, let the women practise their dirges, since death will soon secretly like a thief in the terrors of the night force his way into the houses of all (of the poor through the lower windows and of the rich through the higher ones), and then the corpses will fall as something

for which no one cares, *e.g.*, an unnoticed sheaf that has been left behind, vv. 18-21. Therefore the truth remains of so much the greater importance, that if a wise man, or whoever else may distinguish himself in any way, will boast, he should not boast of the particular matter which has been granted to him as a divine favour, but of that which all ought to possess equally and which in the end can alone preserve the kingdom and the nation—of the intelligent knowledge of the

\* *Speak: thus saith Yahvé.*



true nature of Yahvé, which is possible only as men themselves take part in his thought and life ! vv. 22, 23. For special external advantages, *e.g.*, circumcision, profit nothing : many heathen nations also are acquainted with circumcision, although only in a less perfect form, and are circumcised in the case of many of their members, the Egyptians, Herod. ii. 36, 37, 104, the Idumeans, Ammonites, and Moabites, (on account of their ancient relationship to the Hebrews), Arabian nations (comp. *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. III. p. 230) which wear besides a similar external mark in the peculiar cut of their hair (a kind of tonsure, Herod. iii. 8 and the Arabic passage in the *Wiener Jahrbücher* 1838, p. 153), comp. xxv. 23 ; xlix. 32 ; Lev. xix. 27 ; but the true circumcision, that of the heart, is

now amongst all nations so much more rare, and accordingly Yahvé will now appear in judgment against all who notwithstanding their circumcision are still uncircumcised, Jews and Heathen, vv. 24, 25, comp. iv. 4. The meaning of the entire discourse is quite obvious : and the last two short members of ver. 25 finally completely explain the figures of the bold discourse, inasmuch as they point to the fact that the circumcision of such Heathen, which was also of an imperfect kind (comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 119 sq.; (102 sq.)), was not much better than none and that of Israel was not the true one.—The words דבר כה נאם יהוה, ver. 21, interrupt the connexion, are not in the manner of Yéremyá, and are not found in the LXX ; are therefore, as they now stand, probably not in their proper place.

### III.—*The Hope.*

#### Ch. x.

The reference to the Heathen, with which the former piece closed, must on further thought again awake the eternal hope of Israel ; and the prophet gladly in conclusion weaves this hope into his wreath of mourning words. For it is precisely when the complete overthrow of the true community is realized as quite inevitable, that the inmost heart rebels most energetically against the thought that the gods of the Heathen should again rule, and all the truths that live in the true community perish : the maintenance of the ancient true religion in conflict with the Heathen must produce the regeneration of Israel ! After the prophet has insisted upon this eternal element in Israel in the form of admonition and instruction in two strophes, he returns in the third strophe, vv. 17-25, to the main subject of the discourse.

x.

1.

- 1 Hear ye the word which Yahvé speaketh unto you, house of Israel: || thus saith Yahvé: To the way of the Heathen accustom not yourselves, | and at the signs of the heavens tremble not, because the Heathen tremble at them! || For the statutes of the nations are vain, because a block chosen from the forest, what the artificer's hands shape with the plane— || with silver and with gold it is ornamented, | with nails and hammers it is fastened that it shake not! || Like the posts of a cucumber-field are they and speak not, they must needs be carried because they cannot take a step: | be not afraid of them, for they do no harm, neither is it in them to do good! ||
- 5 — There is none like thee O Yahvé, | great art thou and great thy name with might! || Who should not fear thee thou king of the nations? for unto thee it belongeth; | for among all wise-men of the nations and in all their rule is none like thee: || but at once are they stupid and foolish, | simply vain doctrine is the wood! ||

2.

Silver for overlaying is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Ophir, | what the artificer shapeth and the hands of the

1. Become not heathenish and let not the heathenish dread of the signs of the heavens, such as eclipses of the sun and moon, or even the fear of idols, seduce you to similar superstition! ver. 2. For how vain do the statutes and customs of the Heathen appear, when the way in which an idol of which they are afraid originates is considered, a piece of wood from the forest, overlaid with rich materials, that can neither speak nor walk! vv. 3-5. In contrast with such a product of men's hands, who is Yahvé in his glory? before him all the wise men of the Heathen as well as all other men wherever the idols have sway must keep silence with their doctrine of wood, must become fools: *wood*, i.e., the idol can teach nothing (Hab. ii. 18, 19), it is itself only a

*doctrine of vanities*, i.e., a purely vain doctrine, vv. 6-8, comp. ver. 14. The word כִּרְתָּ, ver. 3, must, as Isa. xlv. 14; lvii. 8, signify *to choose*, strictly to separate, probably to be pointed as Piél in distinction from the material signification *to cut*. A Greek translator, according to the Epist. of Jeremiah, ver. 69, correctly rendered the meaning of תִּמְרֵי מִקְשָׁה by ἐν σκυνηπάτῳ προβασκάνιον, since the *post* in this case serves merely as a scare-crow, although like the idols it is in the form of a man; it is also evident that the Massôra intend by the pointing that this מִקְשָׁה should be understood as in Isa. i. 8, and not as equal to מִקְשָׁה, Isa. iii. 24. It appears from § 354 a that the ׀ at the commencement of ver. 8 can form an antithesis.

2. With all possible pains an idol is prepared from the most costly mate-

rials fetched from a great distance and is decorated as a child dresses up its

- founder; | blue and red purple is their clothing, the work of  
 10 skilled men are they all. || — But Yahvé God is truth, he is  
 living God and eternal king, | at his wrath the earth trembleth  
 and nations abide not his indignation; ||\* he who created the  
 earth by his power, sustaineth the land by his wisdom, | and  
 by his intelligence stretched out the heavens; || as soon as he  
 thundereth there is in heaven a noise of waters, and already  
 he draweth up vapours from the end of the earth, | createth  
 lightnings to the rain, and bringeth out the wind from his  
 chambers. || — Too stupid hath every skilled man become to  
 understand, every founder is ashamed of the graven-image, |  
 because a lie is his molten-work and there is no spirit in them; ||  
 15 vain are they, the work of error, | in the time of their visita-  
 tion they perish! || Not like them is Yaqob's portion, but the  
 Creator of the All — † he is his inheritance, | Yahvé of Hosts  
 his name! ||

## 3.

Withdraw [O Ssion] from the land thy goods, | thou who

doll, ver. 9 (אופר probably an error in transcription for אופר). But the true, eternal, creative, and mighty God of the whole world is and remains a being of an entirely different character, vv. 10-13. And whilst the idols miserably deceive the hopes of their only too fondly credulous worshippers, inasmuch as they vanish in every storm, Israel has in Yahvé an eternal possession, vv. 14-16. Since the first member, ver. 14, is a too general assertion, comp vv. 7, 8, and does not harmonize with the structure of the members, it has been resolved, although the words are repeated in the present form, li. 17, to read חָכָם, as in ver. 9, instead of אדם. As to לקול רתו, verse 13, see § 307 b. Ver. 16 the LXX

correctly omitted the words וישראל שבט, which may have been introduced from Deut. xxxii. 9, although it has already found its way into li. 19: Ps. xvi. 5 sq. is the proper passage to compare here.

The Chaldee ver. 11 has undoubtedly a poetical complexion, and may have originated in some early book of the same kind as the book of Daniel: but it does not belong to this connection, and was probably first written only in the margin of ver. 15 as a similar thought. The Armenian *jergir* (ancient pronunciation *erkir*) answers completely to the form אֶרְקָא which in the more Eastern Aramaic dialects interchanges with אֶרְעָא: in our verse the two orthographies vary with the two poetic members.

3. For the present, the great calamity is inevitable: as was said above,

viii. 14, Ssion may go on to prepare for the siege which barbarous hordes will

\* In the Chaldee dialect: *Thus shall ye say of them: the Gods that made not heaven and earth, | —vanish from the earth and under the heaven will these!*

† is he, and Israel the stock of his inheritance.

dwellest in distress ! || For thus saith Yahvé : behold I deceive the inhabitants of the land this time | and distress them, that it may be found ! || “ Woe is me for my wound, incurable is my blow : | yet I consider “ nevertheless this sickness—I will bear  
 20 it ! || My tent is laid waste, and all my cords broken, | my sons have abandoned me and are gone, none stretcheth any more my tent and putteth up my curtains ; || for the shepherds have become too stupid, and have not sought Yahvé : | therefore they have no blessing, and their entire flock is scattered.” || — Hark, a noise behold there it cometh, and great commotion from the North-country, | to make Yuda’s cities a desolation, a resort of jackals. || “ I know, Yahvé, a man’s way is not his own, it is not of a walking man that he should have a firm  
 25 step ; || correct me, Yahvé, but with justice, | not in thine anger lest thou make me too small ! || pour thine indignation upon the nations that know not thee, and upon the families that never called on thy name, | because they devoured Yaqob and devoured him, consumed him and laid waste his pasture !” ||

lay, and may in haste withdraw its goods from the unprotected land into its walls, nevertheless the inhabitants of the land will this time (xvi. 21) led as by divine delusion into inevitable ruin, not be able to hide their goods from the enemy ! vv. 17, 18, comp. iv. 5, 6, 16 ; vi. 1, 25. But the community, sharing the prophet’s higher views as expressed above, prefers, although in the profoundest sorrow and terrible desolation (iv. 20), to bear everything calmly, inasmuch as it knows that the calamity proceeds solely from negligence in Yahvé’s service, in the first instance on the part of the shepherds (magnates) and then on the part of individuals, vv. 19-21, ver. 21 after Zech. ch. xi. The calamity actually arrives, ver. 22: but the community knows that human affairs are all in a higher hand (acc. Prov. xvi. 9), and prays therefore only for a moderation of the punishment, only that this

supplicating community, which (as the prophet desires and foresees) has been really reformed, may be preserved in the midst of its present severe sufferings at the hands of the Heathen, vv. 23-25. Thus the altered tone of this strophe is essentially based upon the two that precede it. Ver. 18, קלע, properly to throw, hence to throw down, deceive, like רמה, in the LXX, correctly σκελίζω. The word פִּנְנָה means merchandise, wares, goods because כנען = a merchant, dealer, a Phœnician. The ׀ before הכין, ver. 23, acc. § 348 a, The repetition of אָכְלוּ, ver. 25, (where the accents are wrong) is in conformity with § 313 a, and precisely at that time the constantly repeated and ever worse devastation of Israel by the Heathen might most properly be spoken of. This final verse also confirms the account given above of the historical circumstances of this entire piece.



4. *The unfaithfulness to the Covenant.*

## Ch. XI.-XIII.

This discourse falls acc. xiii. 18-21 in the short reign of the young king Yoyakhîn and his mother, who in accordance with the custom of those courts\* received much more honour than the young queen, and under the name of *commandress* was consulted on even all the highest matters of government, comp. xxii. 26; xxix. 2; 2 Kings xxiv. 8, 12, 15 with 1 Kings xv. 13. It was the time when the Chaldeans had already surrounded all the fortified places south of Jerusalem and led away captive great numbers from thence, while Jerusalem itself was not yet besieged, 2 Kings xxiv. 11. The prophet, appealing to Deuteronomy (that is the original book, ch. i.—xxxii. 47) which was at that time still a recent book, had often and zealously warned the people against that faithlessness towards the Covenant of Yahvé, against which the Deuteronomist had hurled such severe threats and curses; as may be gathered from xi. 18-23, it was especially with such exhortations and threats as this book contains that he appeared in his own native town 'Anathôth, not far from Jerusalem, on the north-east. But precisely at that time, from the reign of the previous king Yoyakim, the heathen idolatries had become again very prevalent, comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 37; xxiv. 9, faithlessness and rebellion against the ancient covenant with Yahvé became universal, Yéremyá was threatened by his fellow-town's-people with death, simply on account of his exhortations and threats, and only narrowly escaped their dangerous attempts upon his life, xi. 18—xii. 3. It was thus unhappily completely proved that these serious exhortations from the Deuteronomist had also been in vain, and that now all the calamitous consequences of unfaithfulness towards the Covenant

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\* *History of Israel*, III. 272 (III. 372).

with Yahvé must follow; the prophet with great personal sorrow and lamentation foresees not only that the young king with his mother will lose his crown, but that Jerusalem itself cannot any more be delivered, and that general distress and devastation will fall upon the country. And the eternal hope which he cannot even under these circumstances give up, having the conviction that the victory of the Heathen and the destruction of the true community by them will not be the final phase in the unfolding of divine history, glimmered at that time at such a great distance! Inwardly the nation is incorrigible, and accordingly it must now be inevitably smitten externally also by the punishment of Yahvé!

The discourse therefore describes the calamitous consequences of the futility of all exhortations and threats against unfaithfulness to the covenant, and falls of itself into two parts: (1) the description of the uselessness of all these Deuteronomistic admonitions, ch. xi.-xii., in five strophes, the first showing how the prophet had uttered his admonition in pursuance of his duty, the second immediately declaring how useless that had all been, which the third then confirms more vividly by a description of Yéremyá's own painful experiences; the fourth accordingly already breaks out in lamentation over the mournful consequences that must necessarily follow, over the long desolation of the land by the Heathen that is impending, whilst the fifth, on the contrary, is at last unable longer to suppress some reference to the eternal hope. But precisely these consequences of unfaithfulness to the Covenant and to Yahvé must (2) be still more definitely and instructively brought forward, ch. xiii., in four strophes, of which the two first elucidate the matter by means of symbolical narratives, and the last two recur to the detailed description of the position of the kingdom and of the capital at that time. The last strophe only is somewhat shorter again.

xi.

1. The word which came to Yéremyá from Yahvé, as follows:—

I. *The uselessness of the exhortations to faithfulness to the covenant.*

Ch. XI., XII.

1.

Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak then to the man of Yuda and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that ye say unto them: || thus saith Yahvé Israel's God: | "Cursed the man that heareth not the words of this covenant, || which I commanded your fathers when I led them out of Egypt the iron furnace saying: | hear ye my voice and — do them, according to all that I command you, | so that ye become to me  
5 a people, and I become to you a God!" || in order that I may maintain the oath which I swore unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, at this time! | And I answered and said: Amen, Yahvé! || — Thus spake Yahvé unto me, proclaim all these words in Yuda's cities and in Jerusalem's streets saying: | "hear ye the words of this covenant and — do them! || for I have protested unto your fathers when I led them up out of the land of Egypt until this day earnestly constantly saying: hear my voice! || but they heard not and inclined not their ear, but walked every one in the stubbornness of his wicked heart, | and so I brought upon them all the words of this covenant which I commanded them to do but they did not." ||

1. In the book of Deuteronomy strictly so-called, every one is most earnestly admonished to remain faithful to the ancient law that the great ancient promises may not be lost; this is in fact the principal matter and at the same time the object of this book of Deuteronomy. Inasmuch as this Deuteronomy with its threatenings was sacred writ, Yéremyá justly considered it as primarily addressed to all the prophets and accordingly to himself; the prophets, if they desire to interpret it to the people, must before all things receive it into their own hearts and specially indorse its terrible

threatenings by their own confessions: this is the condition of their being able to speak with effect to the people. And thus it seemed to Yéremyá as if he had first solemnly confirmed for himself the great utterances of Deuteronomy, vv. 2-5 (יְמִינָא ver. 5 after Deut. xxvii. 26) before at the divine command he publicly addressed similar admonitions to the people and called upon them, with protestations like those of Deuteronomy, not to follow in the way of all their disobedient and therefore unfortunate fathers from the days of Moses to that time, vv. 6-8. Indeed, it is quite possible that this entire strophe

## 2.

- But Yahvé said unto me : | treachery is found in the man of
- 10 Yuda and in the inhabitants of Jerusalem ! || they are turned back unto the iniquities of their fore-fathers, who refused to hear my words and even went after strange Gods to serve them ; | Israel's house and Yuda's house have broken my covenant which I concluded with their fathers. || — Therefore thus saith Yahvé : behold I bring unto them a calamity from which they will not be able to escape : | then they cry unto me, yet I will not hear them ; || and the cities of Yuda and the inhabitants of Jerusalem go and cry unto the Gods to whom they burn incense, | but they do not at all help them in the time of their calamity ! || For as numerous as thy cities were thy Gods, O Yuda ! | and as numerous as the streets of Jerusalem ye set up altars to the Shame, altars to burn incense unto the Báal ! || — But do not thou pray for this people, and lift up for them neither complaint nor prayer : | for I will never hear them however often they cry unto me concerning their calamity. ||
- 15 — What hath my beloved in my house ? — to do it, the mischief ? | will vows and consecrated flesh take thy wickedness from thee — wilt thou therefore rejoice ? || A green olive-tree adorned with fair fruit Yahvé named thee : | when a loud roaring was heard fire kindled upon it, when the distress became great its branches broke, || and Yahvé of Hosts that

contains reminiscences of the important efforts which Yéremyá had himself put forth on some occasion at the time of the inauguration of the laws of Deuteronomy ; for the antithesis of the present does not clearly appear before the next strophe. Inasmuch as this is the meaning of this strophe and the connexion of its two halves, the words **וַאֲמַרְתָּ אֵלֵיהֶם**, ver. 3, cannot in this place be correct ; they seem to have been transferred by some misunderstanding from similar passages to this, or to have arisen from some ancient

MS. reading, or seeming to read, **וּדְבַרְתָּהּ**, so that thou say instead of **וּדְבַרְתָּם** ver. 2. The LXX really had this reading, but they also omitted all the words vv. 7, 8 as far as the last **וְלֹא עָשׂוּ**, thereby disturbing the sense of the entire strophe. But **וַאֲמַרְתָּם** might well be the first original reading instead of **תֵּת**. For the sake of greater plainness, **כֹּה אָמַר**. Thus said Yahvé might have stood before ver. 2, and with greater plainness still, Thus said Yahvé to the Prophets : but that is not necessary.

2. But these admonitions were in vain : he, before whom even the most secret things are not hid, is compelled forthwith further to declare that the

existing Israelites no less than their forefathers, including Yuda as well as Israel (acc. ch. iii.), have become apostates from the true God and faithless



hath planted thee pronounced evil over thee : | “on account of the wickedness of the house of Israel and of the house of Yuda, which they made for themselves to embitter me, to burn incense to the Báal !” ||

## 3.

And Yahvé caused me to feel, and I felt | — then thou causedst me to see their deeds ! || and I was as a cade lamb that is led to slaughter, and knew not that against me they devised devices | “let us destroy the tree with its sap and cut it off from the land of the living, that his name be no more men-

to the covenant ! vv. 9, 10. Accordingly, as a fitting punishment, it must be declared to them, that they will some day in great need call in vain to him who in vain called them, the fools who will then, too late it is true, cry to the innumerable false gods, feminine (Astarte, called immediately after the *Shame*) and masculine who are worshipped with immoral rites ! vv. 11-13 : with ver. 13 comp. “Isa.” lvii. 8. Even the earnest intercession of the prophet is then in vain, ver. 14 : but if the nation thinks of being able to cancel its wickedness and guilt by vows and sacrifices in the temple, Yahvé must then enquire, what the nation, which he once called his beloved and would gladly always call by this name, may desire in his temple ?—is it to continue the ancient perfidy (*מִפְּחָד* Ps. cxxxix. 20) ? (for the sacrifice which is brought in the midst of unfaithfulness is as bad as the perfidious wickedness itself!), and whether such sacrifices can really take from them the source of their calamity, their wickedness, so

that on that account they rejoice in boisterous festivities ? ver. 15 (*וְהָיָה* with the same brevity as xxii. 15, 16<sup>r</sup>). It is true, the community was still in Yahvé’s own judgment as an olive-tree, clothed in verdure and beautiful fruit, but the olive-tree appears now as a tree that is forthwith devoured by the lightning when the tempest comes, unable to sustain any calamity, and Yahvé himself who planted it has now pronounced judgment upon it, vv. 16, 17. Instead of *הָרָבִים*, ver. 15, *הַנְּרִים* must be read, with the LXX, and with them also *מַעְלִיכִי* instead of *מַעְלִיד כִּי* ; ver. 16, also following the LXX, *פֶּלֶב צֶרֶחַ רָעִי* must be read instead of *וְרָעִי*, this change suiting well the structure of the verse-members ; the *masc.* and *fem.*, which are both allowable as applied to trees, interchange intentionally with the members. The last words, ver. 17, sound like a citation of the chief thought of ch. iii., to which also the addition concerning the Ten Tribes, ver. 10, had previously pointed.

3. And Yahvé once caused the prophet himself to become painfully acquainted with this hopeless degeneracy of the nation : when he was quite innocently, like a guileless sacrificial lamb (“Isa.” liii. 7), pursuing his prophetic calling among his fellow-countrymen at ‘Anathôth, they threatened him

with death if he persisted in prophesying, indeed, already planned devices by which they might completely destroy him and his name, hating not merely his prophecies but the source of them, his spirit, his life, as if they intended with one blow to annihilate the tree together with its sap, *i.e.*, the entire

- 20 tioned!" || But thou Yahvé of Hosts that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, | let me see thy vengeance upon them, since I have cast my cause upon thee! || — Therefore thus saith Yahvé concerning the men of 'Anathôth who sought thy soul with the words: "thou shalt not prophesy in Yahvé's name, that thou die not by our hand!" || — therefore thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: "behold I will visit them, | the strong will die by the sword, their sons and daughters will fail by famine, || and a remnant will they not have, | because I bring evil upon the people of 'Anathôth, the year of their visitation!"

xii.

- 1 Righteous art thou Yahvé, when I contend against thee: | yet I will hold a dispute with thee: | wherefore is the way of the wicked prosperous, are they all secure that practise treachery? || thou hast planted them they have also taken root, spread bring forth also fruit; | near art thou in their mouth, but far from their reins! || Yet thou Yahvé knowest me, seest me and triest my heart toward thee; | carry them off like sheep for slaughter, | and devote them for a day of massacre! ||

man as he stands before them still in all his freshness and vigour. The memory of this still excites Yéremyá's extreme indignation: full of confidence he invokes the punishment of the Righteous One to whom he leaves the punishment of this wickedness, vv. 18-20, and really hears very shortly in his prophetic mind the threatening sentence of eternal divine justice concerning it, vv. 21-23, nevertheless falls back in the end into some words of despondency (since it must be confessed that there are far too many of the wicked and their punishment has still to be endlessly waited for), although in the midst of his doubts he believes in the righteousness of Yahvé and can find comfort only in his own uprightness before Yahvé and in leaving the wicked to the great day of divine judgment, xii. 1-3; the bitter questions, vv. 1, 2, appears like an echo of Job xxiv. 1, sq.—

With the particle *אָז*, then, ver. 18, the prophet probably refers to that time when he delivered the admonitory discourses mentioned in the first strophe; the particle often points so generally and indefinitely to the past that we may render it by *olim* (from *ille*), or *einst*, our *once*, without greatly altering its force in such cases, Ps. lxxxix. 20, most perceptibly Mal. iii. 16. Instead of *בְּלִחְמוֹ*, ver. 19, it is better to read *בְּלִחְמוֹ*, as Sseph. i. 17, comp. *ante* p. 19; and that *הַיּוֹדִיעַ* may denote to make some one feel a thing in the bad sense is plain from xvi. 21; xxxi. 19, comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes*, II. 128. The word *בְּלִיָּתִי*, ver. 20, (unless *בְּלִיָּתִי* should be read instead) is explained as coming from *בָּל* by what is shown § 121 a. Instead of *יִמְרוֹ*, ver. 22 b, *יִתְמוֹ* suits the structure of the members better and is the reading of the LXX and xiv. 15.

## 4.

How long will the earth mourn and the plants of the whole field wither? | for the wickedness of its inhabitants beasts and birds perish, because they say, "he seeth not our ways!" ||  
 5 For with footmen thou rannest, and they wearied thee:—and shouldst thou compete with the horses? | and upon the land of peace thou didst trust—and how shouldst thou do if the Jordan is too high! || Indeed also thy brethren and thy father's house—also they dealt treacherously with thee, also they shouted aloud after thee; | believe them not when they speak kindly unto thee! || — I have forsaken my house, abandoned mine inheritance, | given my soul's dearest thing into the hand of its enemy; || mine inheritance hath become to me like a lion in the forest, | it cried against me aloud, therefore I hate it. || Is then mine inheritance a flock of speckled vultures unto me? are vultures round about it? | come gather all the wild ani-  
 10 mals of the field, bring them to the feast! || many shepherds have destroyed my vine, trampled my property, | have made the property of my delight into a waste desert. ||

4. In such great and general moral decline, the entire creation must also suffer, deprived of its adornment and its wealth, mourning in desolation: and who would not complain aloud on account of it? (after Hos. iv. 3; comp. *infra* ch. xiv.) The prophet complains aloud at it, vv. 4-6: although he knows that the guilty cause of all this misery of the land is to be found in the inhabitants themselves, who even imagine that God does not observe their conduct and that they may do whatever they like! ver. 4; O who can endure longer to remain in the society of these men? this is as little possible as that one, already competing with difficulty with running footmen, should contend in a race with horses! or as little as one, having naturally based his calculations upon an undisturbed country, is able to stand against the great and sudden floods, *e.g.*, of the Yordan (comp. Job. xl. 23)! one is unable to place confi-

dence in even the nearest friends of the house, they also are faithless and also call evil things loudly after one (2 Kings ii. 23, 24; "Mic." vii. 5, 6), vv. 5, 6, comp. the very similar words, ix. 3. נַאֲרִין is the *swollen stream, high-flood*, of the Yordan, ver. 5 and xlix. 19 (comp. *Hist. of Israel*, II. 246 (II. 347)), quite a different meaning from "Zech." xi. 3. Instead of אֶחָדֶיךָ, ver. 4, which as *our future* supplies no distinct meaning here, אֶרְחֹמֶיךָ must be read with the LXX.—But not less does Yahvé complain regarding his peculiarly dear inheritance, the holy land, how he has been compelled to abandon it to the enemy to be laid waste, since through the negligence and folly of the nation it has become entirely wild and degenerate with regard to himself, and like a wild animal has turned against its best friend! vv. 7, 8. It is already as if speckled vultures covered the whole land as they do a dead carcass in

## 5.

They have made it waste, it mourneth unto me so badly wasted : | laid waste is the whole earth, because no man giveth heed ; || over all heights in the pasturage came spoilers, because the sword of Yahvé devoureth from one end of the earth unto the other ; | prosperity hath no flesh. || — They sow wheat but thorns they reap, take pains—without profit | —and ye shall be ashamed of your increase before the fiery anger of Yahvé ! || Thus saith Yahvé concerning all mine evil neighbours that touch the inheritance which I bequeathed to my people Israel : | behold I pluck them out from their land, and  
 15 the house of Yuda will I pluck out of their midst ; || yet after that I have plucked them up I will again compassionate them | and bring them back every one to his inheritance and every one to his land : || and if they then learn the ways of my people, to swear in my name “as Yahvé liveth !” | just as they taught my people to swear by the Báal ; | then they receive houses in the midst of my people ; || but if they hear not, | then I utterly pluck up such a nation destroying completely ! saith Yahvé. ||

order to satiate their hunger, so that from a distance people might well enquire with amazement, whether the whole land had become a flock of vultures ? (comp. “Isa.” lx. 8), and the wild animals of the field also have only to come and take their share of the spoil, since this land which is so dear to Yahvé is at length repeatedly and wholly laid waste ! vv. 9, 10, “Isa.” lvi. 9. The Vulgate correctly trans-

lates צָבֹר by *discolour*, while the LXX erroneously compare it with the Arabic *qhabu'*, *ḡalḡḡ* ; it is a descriptive word merely, which as *b* shows might be absent without affecting the sense to any important extent. It should be especially noted that עֵיט is a noun of multitude, § 176 *a*, and may therefore be rendered more freely in our languages.

5. It is true, proceeds the higher voice in the last strophe, that it may become once more all the more profoundly conscious in the midst of such great sorrow of the antithesis to it, of the eternal hope, it is true, the land is laid waste to the great sorrow of Yahvé himself, foreign conquerors, as was already indicated, ver. 10, having in the general rage of the punishment fallen upon all its heights :—laid waste, be-

cause no one observed soon enough the divine intention which long ago threatened such an end, and now the corruption and wickedness has become quite general ! vv. 11, 12. But should the devastators, the Heathen, imagine that they have obtained for themselves a lasting advantage by their deeds, as though the true community must for ever perish at their approach, they make a great mistake, have sown wheat



to reap thorns, have taken all their trouble in vain, and shall, on the contrary, be ashamed of their empty fruit when Yahvé's anger is forthwith kindled! ver. 13. Yahvé entertains the unalterable determination to drive forth as with irresistible might the neighbouring Heathen nations, which have become insufferably insolent, from the land which they at present possess, and likewise, with the same violent commotion as that by which Israel is now being dispersed through the Heathen countries, to snatch them again from these countries and their power, ver. 14. The Heathen nations also will then look for redemption and again enter the holy land, indeed dwell in it,

but only as they enter the now renewed and reformed community and by the service of Yahvé make good again, as it were, the injury they had done to Israel by seducing it to idolatry, only then will they *obtain houses* (properly be built again, restored from their ruin) in the true and therefore blessed community, vv. 15-17. Yéremyá thus returns in passing to the Messianic hopes, in that form, however, in which it was necessarily presented to him by the circumstances of the time; see further at ch. xlii-xliii. Thus this piece closes just in the same way as the previous one, ch. vii-x. had done: comp. *ante* p. 127.

## II. *The consequences, symbolical and literal, of the unfaithfulness.*

### Ch. XIII.

xiii.

1.

1 Thus said Yahvé unto me: "go and buy thee a linen girdle, and put it on thy loins, but in water thou mayst not place it!" || and I bought the girdle according to Yahvé's word, and put it on my loins. || —Then came Yahvé's word unto me afterwards thus: || "take the girdle which thou hast bought, which is on thy loins, and arise and go to the Fresh-water and hide it there in a rock-cleft!" || so I went, and hid it by the Fresh-water, as Yahvé had commanded me. || And then after the lapse of many days—Yahvé said unto me: "arise go to the Fresh-water, and take from there the girdle which I commanded thee to hide there!" || and I went to the Fresh-water and digged, and took the girdle from the place whither I had hid it, and behold—spoiled was the girdle, it was good for nothing. ||

1. But the purpose of the discourse is to chasten the unfaithfulness of the people to the covenant, and it cannot therefore come to a close with such distant hopes: a return is made to the thought with which it began by means of the introduction of an instructive

symbol. We are no longer in a position to say what led Yéremyá to this account of the girdle, and what amount of historical fact it may contain: in brief, he must at some time in his life have found by experience that the newest and cleanest girdle, this

## 2.

And Yahvé's word came unto me thus : || thus saith Yahvé :  
In this wise will I spoil the pride of Yuda, and the great pride

ornament and distinction of a man, quickly perishes when it has been placed where it is exposed to wet ; and it now appears to him as if Yahvé himself had thereby given him a type of the nation which was properly speaking as closely connected with him as his fairest ornament although it is now utterly spoiled and useless. It further appears to him now therefore as if Yahvé had commanded him at first to put on a new, well-preserved girdle, vv. 1, 2 ; then, to hide it in a place underground where the water would be sure to pass over it and make it wet, dirty, and rotten, vv. 3-5 ; finally, to look for it again after some time and to see what had come to it, vv. 6, 7.

The word פְּרָת, vv. 4 sq., was understood of the Euphrates by the ancient translators and the Massōra apparently pointed it accordingly : yet this name is found without the addition of נָהָר when the Euphrates is meant only Gen. ii. 14, and Jer. li. 63 in the entire Old Testament, and these exceptions have their special reasons ; on the other hand, the usual name הַנָּהָר is familiar to Yéremyá also, ii. 18 ; or at least he uses the compound נָהָר פְּרָת xlvi. 2, 6, 10, as other authors do. But this is not all : it is apparent that the mention of the Euphrates would be not only unmeaning in this connexion, simply because Yéremyá never went to the Euphrates and not even in an imaginary case could such an arbitrary supposition be introduced, but also pur-

poseless, inasmuch as the nearest wet place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem would suffice for the object. The same conclusion is supported by the entire plan of the narrative, ver. 1, when the command is given at first by way of contrast to what follows not to place the girdle in water, i.e., not to allow it to get wet. We must therefore (which is most probable) either understand the word פְּרָת like Arab. *furât* of sweet, or fresh, water in general (and the Euphrates as the Greeks said instead of Ephrât, putting their stamp on the word, probably derives its name thence), or must suppose that פְּרָת, like the Arab. *furḏha*, denotes a place near the water, where the stream may easily overflow, literally, a *breach* of the water into the land ; inasmuch as in Aramaic פְּרָת may be used instead of פְּרִץ, to *rend*, it is very easy to see how such a place may here be called פְּרָת as well as מִפְּרִץ, Judges v. 17. This latter word, however, is used of the sea-coast, and it is probable that some wet place near Jerusalem had the name of פְּרָת. Nevertheless, even as early as fifty years later, a prophet took the word to mean the Euphrates, li. 63.—Since very recently a valley and a spring *Forah* have been discovered near Jerusalem (see *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1867, p. 911),\* there is less room to doubt the correct meaning. The most surprising thing is that modern scholars should seriously suggest that פְּרָת is the same as אֶפְרַת, and therefore as Bethlehem !

2. The application is briefly made, vv. 8-11 : Israel ought to cleave firmly

and faithfully to Yahvé, having been accepted by him as his nation and his

\* At the end of the work the author adds the further reference : " Compare the fuller particulars with regard to this recently discovered spring, which is situated about six English miles north-east of Jerusalem, in the account of Konrad Schick in *Ausland*, for the year 1867, pp. 572-4."—Tr.

10 of Jerusalem! || This evil people of them who refused to hear my words, who walked in their heart's stubbornness and followed other gods to serve them and to do homage to them | —it shall be as this girdle which is good for nothing: || for as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so I made to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Yuda, saith Yahvé, | that it might be to me for a people, and for a name and for a praise and for an ornament: | but they heard not. || —So speak then unto them this word: Thus saith Yahvé Israel's God: "every wine-jug will be filled with wine!" and if they say unto thee: "Do we then really not know that every wine-jug will be filled with wine?" || then say unto them: Thus saith Yahvé: behold I fill all the inhabitants of this land and the kings which sit unto David upon his throne | and the priests and the prophets and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—full of drunkenness, || and dash them one against another, and the fathers and sons together, saith Yahvé: | I will not spare nor have pity nor take compassion not to destroy them! ||

## 3.

15 Hear ye and give heed, be not haughty! for Yahvé speaketh; || give unto Yahvé your God honour, before it groweth dark and before your feet stumble on the mountains of darkness, | that ye look for light, but he turneth it into gloom changeth it into mist! || And if ye hear it not, in secret my soul will weep,—at your haughtiness, | and shed tears yes shed tears

glory, just as the girdle clings to the loins of a man as his fairest ornament: but by its own resistance Israel has become as morally degenerate as such a spoiled girdle which no man that values his honour can venture to put on again! To this symbolical narrative a fresh figure is immediately added: the punishment which necessarily follows such inward depravity is described as a

stupefaction or fatal confusion and intoxication, which is as certain to come as it is impossible to think of a wine-jug without conceiving it as in its time filled with wine: if the nation is thus inwardly totally ruined, Yahvé must also complete its ruin outwardly! vv. 12-14, comp. ch. xxv, after Isa. xix. 14, 15.

3. Thus the discourse is able again to flow on in the full stream of admonition and reprimand, and a solemn opening of it is made ver. 15. O, cries the deeply agitated prophet to the nation, give honour to Yahvé by obedience,

before the darkness gathers too impenetrably and widely and ye stumble upon entire mountains of it: if this is not done, the prophet must weep incessantly in secret over the community of Yahvé as it is led captive by the insolence of

and run down with tears will mine eye—that Yahvé's flock is carried away captive. || —Say to the king and to the lady: “take ye the lowest place! | for from your heads falleth your beautiful crown!” || the cities of the South are shut in, opened by no one, | all Yuda is carried away captive, completely  
 20 carried away! || —Lift up [Ssion] thine eyes and behold them that come from the North | (where is the flock which was given unto thee, thy beautiful sheep?): || what wilt thou say when they visit thee, since thou hast accustomed them to be over thee ruling friends? | will not pangs seize thee as a woman in travail? ||

## 4.

And when thou [Ssion] sayest in thine heart “wherefore did such things befall me?” | —because thy guilt was so great thy skirts were uncovered, thine heels violated! || Will a Moor change his skin, and a leopard his spots? | then ye also might do good, ye that are accustomed to evil-doing! || —Therefore I scatter them as flying stubble | by the wind of the desert! ||

the Heathen, and can a prophet experience a greater calamity? vv. 16, 17. But unhappily his dark foreboding becomes forthwith predominant: already the king and his mother (the *imperatoria*, xxix. 2) may be told to descend from the throne, whilst south of Jerusalem all the cities are securely enclosed by the Chaldeans and the inhabitants led away captive in great numbers (Amos i. 6), vv. 18, 19. Jerusalem, it is true, is still free, while it has lost the largest number and the most distinguished subjects of the kingdom (its *flock*): but the northern enemies are approaching it also, and what will it do when it is suddenly attacked by them, especially as it has long been accustomed, acc. ii. 18, 36, to acknowledge

foreigners as friends and rulers? will it not then be reduced to extremities? vv. 20, 21. On לְרֹאשׁ, with which עֲלֵיךְ is connected, comp. Lam. i. 5; אֲלֵפִים might be understood to mean *princes*, according to its use in poetry, “Zech.” ix. 7; xii. 5, 6, the rendering then being, *since thou hast accustomed them to rule over thee as princes*: but אֲלֵפִים has this meaning only in close connexion with a tribal name: it is better therefore to take it in its ordinary sense, acc. iii. 4; xi. 19; comp. further § 336 b. Instead of יִפְקֹד it is better to read יִפְקְדוּ with the LXX, since ver. 20 a is the preparation for ver. 21, and b is merely a parenthesis in the midst of the discourse.

4. Undoubtedly Jerusalem's punishment is severe; this city is disgraced and dishonoured without any consideration like a common harlot, comp. Isa.

xxii. 8; Nah. iii. 5 sq.; but she cannot on that account complain, too numerous are the sins to which she has habituated herself as to a second nature! vv. 22,



25 This is thy lot, the portion of thy measure from me, saith Yahvé : | because thou hast forgotten me and didst trust in the lie : || therefore I also uncover thy skirts before thine eyes | that thy shame may be seen ! || Thy harlotries and thy neighings, the wickedness of thy whoredom—upon the hills in the field have I seen thine abominations ! | woe unto thee Jerusalem ! thou wilt not be pure—O after how long still ! ||

23. Accordingly her inhabitants must be scattered in all directions like stubble before the wind of the desert : the eternal, divine retribution must follow, vv. 24-26 ; the numerous unchaste and

abominable idolatries (comp. iii. 2 ; v. 8)—alas, Ssion will not be purified again from their pestilential impurity for a long time to come ! ver. 27.

### 5. *The Drought.*

Ch. XIV. 1—XVII. 18.

The occurrence of a continued and exceedingly oppressive drought gave the prophet a fresh occasion for another discourse of a similar nature. When such a national calamity as this presses heavily upon all, it is naturally the prophet that first feels called upon to become the interpreter of the community before Yahvé, to wrestle and pray for it ; as in earlier times the book of Yôél showed. The question therefore at this time was, what Yéremyá would think and say under this new calamity. Now, however much his feelings as a man are stirred by the new and grievous sufferings of the whole land, indeed, although carried away by pity he is about to offer his earnest intercession for the sinful nation, the higher voice nevertheless irresistibly declares to him, that in this case all prayers and intercessions must be in vain, because the nation is already too deeply sunk in its moral perversities and with the impossibility of moral reformation the external suffering must also be inevitable, as Hosea had once similarly spoken with reference to the Northern Kingdom. This piece presents the struggle between these two opposing feelings within the prophet's breast, the thought predominates however, of the

divine inevitableness of the present suffering and the necessity of still severer chastisements, indeed, of the final destruction of the existing kingdom, mournful as this may be; and as it may easily be supposed that the prophet provoked hostility and persecution of most various kinds by the free utterances of such dark anticipations, many a prophetic word with a merely personal reference has found its way into this piece; comp. xv. 10; xvii. 15.

This piece also falls into two halves, each of which closes with a strophe having a purely personal reference. In the first half the first strophe describes in vivid colours the drought and how the nation, at other times so stiff-necked in its relation to Yahvé, is brought by it to prayer to Yahvé: but the second strophe shows that Yahvé is so little moved by their prayer, that, on the contrary, he immediately forbids the intercession of the prophet and does not listen to his remonstrance; the latter ventures nevertheless, as the third strophe describes, to present his intercession, but it is in vain, because still greater punishments, according to the fourth strophe, must follow on account of the complete degeneracy of the nation; to which a fifth strophe is added with personal reference. When the discourse has thus in the first half been brought to that point that it appears that deliverance is impossible, the second half with explanatory symbols is added to make the whole complete: the prophet receives in the first strophe the instruction to found no house and to visit no society—because general destruction has been determined by Yahvé: and how little this threat has been pronounced without reason, the second and third strophes then explain in detail by a further consideration of the hopeless condition of the nation; until the discourse gradually loses itself in general prophetic reflections and in the fourth strophe connects with them some personal matters. Although the drought is referred to only in the first three strophes of the first half of the discourse, so that it is obvious that it was simply the occasion, and no more,

of this new presentation of the unalterable view of Yéremyá, still in the second half the discourse alludes at least by a strong figure to the drought as the origin of the entire piece, xvii. 8, and there can be no doubt that all these strophes are closely connected.

xiv.

1 That which came as word of Yahvé unto Yéremyá, concerning the seasons of drought.

Ver. 1. As to the unusual construction of אִשָּׁר in such cases, see *ante* p. 75.

1. *The uselessness of intercession for the people.*

Ch. xiv., xv.

1.

Yuda withereth away, and her markets are in mourning bowed to the ground, | and Jerusalem's lamentation ascendeth aloud; || their Nobles send their Inferiors for water, | they come to the wells find no water—return with empty buckets, | blush and become ashamed and cover their head; || because the ground is dismayed that no rain cometh upon the earth, | the husbandmen blush cover their head. || Yea also the hind calveth upon the field and forsaketh it, | because there is no green herb; || and wild-asses stand upon the bare summits sniffing the wind like the dragon, | with failing eyes because there is no herbage. || —If our sins witness against us, O Yahvé so act for thy name's sake, | because many are our transgressions wherein we sinned against thee! || thou hope of Israel, his helper in time of need: | wherefore wilt thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfarer that turneth in to pass the night? || wherefore wilt thou be as one overcome, as a hero that is unable to help, | since thou nevertheless art in our midst Yahvé, and thy name is called over us: O leave us not! ||

1. The most distressing drought has now come upon the whole land, as is described with a few great touches, vv. 2-6: all cities full of mourning in their

civic gatherings, accordingly in their markets, ver. 2, after Isa. iii. 26; the leading people vainly sending their subordinates to all cisterns for water,

## 2.

- 10 Thus saith Yahvé of this people: Thus did they love to stray, refrained not their feet? | but Yahvé doth not accept them, now will he remember their guilt and punish their sin! || And Yahvé said unto me: | Pray not for this people for good! || when they fast I will never hear their cry, and when they bring sacrifice and offering I will never accept them: | for by the sword and by famine and by pestilence will I destroy them! || —Then said I: O Lord Yahvé! behold the prophets say unto them “ye will not see the sword, and ye will not have famine, | for certain peace give I unto you in this place!” || But Yahvé said unto me: falsehood the prophets prophesy in my name: | I have not sent them nor commanded them nor spoken unto them; a false vision and divination and nothingness and deceit
- 15 of their heart they prophesy unto you! || therefore thus saith Yahvé concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name but not sent by me | and who say “sword and famine will not be in this land!” | : by the sword and by famine will those prophets meet their end! || and the people to whom they prophesy will be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem from before the famine and the sword, buried by no one, | they their wives sons and daughters; | and I pour their wickedness upon them! || Therefore speak thou this discourse unto them.

the inhabitants of the country similarly seeing full of profound sorrow their hopes in the soil deceived, it being itself as it were terrified by the want of rain, vv. 3, 4; but the hind also, contrary to her nature, must abandon her newly born young from want of water, and wild asses which usually find refreshment enough upon the most barren mountain summits now fainting sniff after air like the dragon, vv. 5, 6 (תנין would accordingly be a clerical error for תנין; probably heavily breathing animals with widely opened mouths were intended by dragons, comp. however Bochart's *Hierozoicon*, p.

436).—In such great distress, it is true, the people can do no other than pray to Yahvé, who now appears unwilling to help, for deliverance and mercy; being not unprepared to confess its sins against him, it seeks to excite in conformity with the commonly used words of the Psalms his compassion at least for his name's sake (Ps. xxiii. 3), and ventures to enquire, whether he, then, their tutelary deity will be as an unknown stranger (who turns in to pass the night, נטה = גור and סור xv. 5), or even as a bound hero who therefore cannot render help (a Samson)?

2. As if astonished at this unwonted phenomenon of the nation thus ear-

nestly praying unto him, Yahvé at first, ver. 10, falls into a kind of reflection



## 3.

Let mine eyes run down in tears night and day and cease not! | for with great ruin is the virgin-daughter of my people smitten, with a vèry painful blow; || if I go into the field behold those who are fallen by the sword, or if I enter the city behold diseases from famine! | yea also prophet also priest journey into the land and have not become wise! || Hast thou then really rejected Yuda, or Ssion hath thy soul loathed? | wherefore smotest thou us and we have no relief? | wait for salvation—but there is no good, for the time of relief—behold  
 20 there is mortal-terror! || We know O Yahvé our iniquity, our fathers' guilt, | that we sinned against thee; || reject not for thy name's sake—dishonour not the throne of thy majesty! | call to remembrance break not thy covenant with us! || are there then among the Heathen-vanities givers of rain? or will the heaven give showers? | art thou not Yahvé our God that we wait upon

thereupon; have they taken such great pains with hasty steps to appear before me and to present their prayer? (comp. xv. 1) it is hardly credible! however, their straying and running is in vain, they are positively unacceptable to Yahvé and just at this time are punishable before him! after Hos. viii. 13. And immediately he calls upon the prophet as the mediator standing in his presence not to pray for those whom no fasting and weeping will enable to escape the decreed punishment! vv. 11, 12. The prophet next seeks indeed to excuse them as those who have been misled by the oracles of bad prophets, but Yahvé is compelled to announce the severe punishments which will come,

and which have been provoked by their own wickedness, not merely to the latter as false prophets but also to the former who thoughtlessly gave ear to them, vv. 13-16. The first words ver. 17 cannot belong to what follows, inasmuch as the prophet begins here to speak of himself; they must therefore refer back to ver. 16, unless perhaps (which is the most probable) an entire sentence following them has been lost, comp. iv. 11. Ver. 13 the LXX had the wholly unsuitable words ἀλήθειαν καὶ εἰρήνην: but שָׁלוֹם וְאַמֶּת if we were to read thus, would be unsuitable here, inasmuch as peace or no peace is all that is spoken of.

3. Still, it is impossible that the prophet should at once be pacified by such an answer: the more terrible the threat and the plainer the commencement of its fulfilment already appears, the more irresistibly does his human feeling seek vent, ver. 17; on all sides he sees the misery, and *even prophets*

and priests roam about, unable to give either counsel or help, ver. 18 (לֹא יִדְעוּ having the same sense as Ps. lxxxii. 5; Isa. i. 3). At this point, notwithstanding the first warning of ver. 11, the intercession of the prophet involuntarily breaks forth and in faltering prayer he musters all the reasons

xv. thee ? | for thou hast created all these || — — But Yahvé said  
 1 unto me : Although Mose and Samûel stand before me, my  
 soul inclineth not to this people : | dismiss them from my face  
 that they go forth ! || and if they then say unto thee “ whither  
 shall we go forth ? ” | then say unto them : Thus saith Yahvé :  
 whoever is to death—to death ! and whoever is to the sword—to  
 the sword ! | and whoever is to the famine—to the famine !  
 and whoever is to captivity—to captivity ! || and I appoint  
 over them four kinds saith Yahvé : the sword to slay  
 and the dogs to trail, | and the fowls of the heaven and the  
 beast of the field to devour and to destroy ; || and make them  
 a plaything for all kingdoms of the earth | —on account of  
 Manasseh the son of Hizqia king of Yuda, for that which he  
 did in Jerusalem ! ||

## 4.

5 For who will spare thee, Jerusalem, or who bemoan thee ? |  
 and who will turn in to ask how thou doest ? || Thou rejectedst  
 me, saith Yahvé, going backwards : | —so I stretched my hand  
 over thee and destroyed thee, was weary of repenting ; || and I  
 fanned them with the fan into the gates of the earth, made  
 childless wasted my people : | —from their ways they returned

which might move the ancient tutelary deity of Israel again to bestow his mercy upon the nation which is now conscious of its sins and upon the ancient city in this mournful time, vv. 19-22. *All these*, ver. 22, *omnia hæc*, acc. § 172 b, is the visible universe, comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes*, III. p. 148, on Job xii. 6.—But the higher voice replies to this, although far more powerful intercessors, although Moses and Samuel stood before Yahvé, he would be unable to promise anything good to this people that besieges him with its prayers ; no, they shall be delivered to the four principal forms of punishment (Rev. vi. 2-8) and the four

shall be their lords and rulers, their angels of judgment as it were : war, the pursuing dog that carries them off into captivity, the bird and the beast of prey to devour those who have fallen by famine and pestilence : yea, they shall become a trembling, *i.e.*, a shaking, fleeting, transitory object, the sport of the winds, or rather, with greater force, a *play-ball*, (comp. with respect to זָרָעָה and this proverb, xxiv. 9 ; xxix. 18 ; xxxiv. 17 ; Ez. xxiii. 46, where it interchanges very properly with *prey*, acc. Dent. xxviii. 25 and § 72 b) — on account of the perpetuation of the abominations which Manasseh introduced ! comp. *ante* ii. 30.

4. And, alas, unlamented and unpitied, only too deservedly will the city fall, and it cannot be otherwise, ver. 5 : it was not until she utterly rejected

Yahvé that he chastised her after many vain endeavours to save her by kindness, ver. 6, but neither did the severe castigations of dispersion and war which

not ! || More numerous were their widows to me than the sand of the sea, I brought unto them over the mother of the young warrior a devastation at noonday, | caused suddenly to fall upon her distress and mortal terror ; || she that bore seven languished breathed out her soul, her sun went down while it was yet day, ashamed and confounded, | and their remnant will I give to the sword before their enemies, saith Yahvé. ||—

- 12 Doth then iron break, iron from the North, and metal ? || Thy substance and thy treasures will I give for booty— | without a price, for all thy sins in all thy borders ; || and cause thee to serve thine enemies in a land unknown to thee : | for a fire kindleth in my nose on your account, which will burn continually ! ||

5.

- 10 “Woe is me my mother that thou hast borne me, a man of contention and man of strife for the whole earth ! | I am neither creditor nor debtor : yet every one curseth

were beginning avail to reform her ! ver. 7 (the *gates of the earth* are the so-called four corners or points of the earth, Isa. xi. 12, in other words, the *boundaries*, outlets תוצאות, the extreme countries, not as in Nah. iii. 13, where a particular country is meant). She is now in this condition : in consequence of the last calamitous wars *widows* in great numbers, almost a vain object of the Divine compassion, Isa. ix. 16 ; in open daylight the devastator (the Chaldean) came upon the *mother of the fallen or captive* (xviii. 21), *young warrior*, comp. xviii. 21, 22, all kinds of terror (עיר = ציר, as Ps. xxxi. 22) overwhelmed her, even the most vigorous mother (acc. 1 Sam. ii. 5) passed away like the sun at mid-day, and for those who may remain there is nothing but fresh war ! vv. 8, 9.—As little as iron will break, especially the strongest northern iron and metal, will it be pos-

sible that the northern colossus of the Chaldean empire should be broken, against which Israel foolishly rises, ver. 12, and the result will be simply that it with all its treasures will become the cheapest, easiest (Ps. xlv. 13) spoil, and must be taken captive into a distant land—to endure the deserved wrath of Yahvé for all the sins which have been discovered everywhere within its borders, vv. 13, 14 ; ver. 11 and ver. 12 b, the sentences are very broken. Instead of the unmeaning והעברתי we must read, according to xvii. 4 and several manuscripts, והעבדתך, and probably עליכם ער עולם must be inserted after acc. xvii. 4 ; it is also better to remove כִּי before גבולך, which is not found in the very similar passage, xviii. 3. The two verses, 10, 11, which are purely personal to the prophet, have evidently lost their proper place, and are quite suitable when placed before ver. 15.

5. It is true, the prophet announces such mournful forebodings neither gladly nor without personal danger : he

wishes that he had not been born, so that he might not be hated and cursed by everyone, although he is innocent

- me!" || Saith Yahvé: verily I sustain thee for good, |  
 verily I cause in the time of evil and in the time of distress  
 15 the enemy to supplicate thee! ||— "Thou knowest it  
 Yahvé! remember me, and visit me and avenge me of my  
 persecutors! | do not—according to thy long-suffering—  
 take me away: know how I for thy sake bear scorn! ||  
 Thy words were found—I did eat them, and thy word was  
 unto me the joy and gladness of my heart, | that thy name  
 was called over me, O Yahvé God of Hosts! || I never sat  
 in the circle of the mockers and rejoiced: | before thy hand  
 I sat alone, because thou filledst me with punishments. ||  
 Wherefore was my pain continual, and my wound incurra-  
 ble not permitting relief? | wilt thou really become unto  
 me as a false-fountain, a water that is not sure?"||—  
 Therefore thus saith Yahvé: if thou returnest and I cause  
 thee to return—to stand before me, | and if thou bringest  
 forth precious things from vile, being as my mouth: | then  
 20 will they turn unto thee, but not thou unto them! || and  
 I make thee unto this people a fenced wall of metal, that  
 they fight against thee and not prevail against thee: | for  
 with thee am I to help thee and to deliver thee, saith  
 Yahvé; || and I deliver thee from the hand of the wicked, |  
 and redeem thee from the grasp of the mighty! ||

and not mixed up with the trade of the world! ver. 10 (as early as 1826 it was maintained in my *Kritische Grammatik*, p. 507, that מְקַלְלֹנִי is a corruption of מְקַלְלֵנִי).—But against such despondency, as it threatens to get the upper hand, Yahvé strengthens him by his consoling promises, that he will preserve him for good (to enjoy again good things), yea, bring his enemies yet in the time of calamity to pray to him for his intercession! ver. 11, comp. ver. 19, vii. 16; Job xlii. 8. The *K'thāb* שְׁרִיתֶיךָ is correct, from the Aram. שָׁר, to strengthen, preserve; but the Q'ri' שְׁרִיתֶיךָ can, acc. § 121, *a ad fin.*, only be an intensive form from the same root.—And again, vv. 15-18, that human fear and distressed prayer for deliverance recur at considerable length:

were it only for the sake of the divine forbearance, he desires not to be carried off by swift death, Ps. xxviii. 3, since he bears reproach only for Yahvé's sake (Ps. lxi. 8, 20), for the sake, therefore, of him whose prophetic words were as it were eagerly devoured by him (Ez. iii. 1 sq.) as soon as ever they came to him, to him who considered it his highest joy to stand near to Yahvé as prophet and servant, who at all times humbly and sorrowfully acknowledged (Ps. xxvi. 4) the divine gravity of these times, whose fury he as prophet is compelled first to feel (comp. vi. 11, with Mic. vi. 9); wherefore is his pain incurable, does Yahvé appear to him as a deceitful brook which may not be trusted? Job vi. 15 sq.—But still more powerfully the reply resounds from



above, vv. 19-21 : if he suffers himself always to return from such human trials to Yahvé to serve him alone, and if he at the same time as *God's mouth*, i.e. acc. Ex. iv. 16 (comp. Vol. i. p. 9) as true interpreter or prophet of Yahvé, ever extracts as a skilful metallurgist (vi. 27) the precious from the base, and brings forth from his prophetic work-

shop and displays merely the former, he will then, having become invincible as regards his enemies, probably see them return to him again, seeking his intercession, ver. 11, while he himself will not need their help, nor be compelled to turn to them with his requests ! comp. i. 18, 19.

II. *Further confirmation of the hopeless ruin of the nation.*

Ch. xvi. 1—xvii. 18.

1.

xvi.

1 And the word of Yahvé came unto me saying : || Thou shalt not take thee a wife | nor have sons and daughters in this place ! || for thus saith Yahvé concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place | and concerning the mothers that bare them and concerning their fathers that begot them in this land : || of deadly diseases will they die, not lamented nor buried, becoming dung upon the face of the ground ; | and by the sword and by famine pass away, so that their carcass will be food for the birds of heaven and the beasts of  
5 the earth ! ||—For thus saith Yahvé : Enter not into a mourning-feast house, and go not to lament nor to bemoan them : | for I take my peace from this people, saith Yahvé—the kindness and the compassion, || and great and small die in this land unburied, | none lamenting them nor wounding or shearing themselves for them, || neither will one break bread to one for mourning—to comfort him for the dead, | or give one to drink with the cup of consolation—for his father and for his mother.|| And into the mourning-feast house shalt thou not go, to sit with them to eat and to drink ! || for thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God : behold I put away from this place before your eyes and in your days | the sound of joy and of gladness, the sound of the bridegroom and of the bride ! ||

1. It is possible that Yéremyá had long ago given up all thought of marriage on account of the universal distress of the times, and that he had also in like manner avoided all kinds of

boisterous society and pleasure : especially as such abstinence would most correspond with the prevalent seriousness of his mind. But now, as he looks back upon the great divine judgments which

## 2.

- 10 And when thou annoucest all these words to this people, and they say unto thee “wherefore hath Yahvé spoken concerning us all this great evil? | and what is our guilt and what our transgression wherein we transgressed against Yahvé our God?” || then say unto them: because your fathers forsook me (saith Yahvé), and went after other Gods and served them and did them homage, | but forsook me and kept not my teaching, || ye however acted still worse than your fathers, | since ye went every one after the stubbornness of his wicked heart, in order not to hearken unto me: || therefore I fling you away from this land upon the land which neither ye nor your fathers knew, | and ye serve there day and night other Gods, because I will not give you any favour! || Therefore behold days come, saith Yahvé, | and it will no more be said “by the life of Yahvé who led up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt!” || but “by the life of Yahvé who led up the sons of Israel from the land of the North and from all the lands whither he had expelled

had befallen the land, it appears to him as if Yahvé had distinctly commanded him not to set up a household, vv. 2-4, nor to go to a social meal, whether it was a funeral feast which the friends had given to the mourners, vv. 5-7, or an ordinary joyous feast, vv. 8, 9: because according to the entire condition of the present and of the immediate future there was no place for all this; for partly by famine and the diseases which it produces (comp. xiv. 18), and partly by war, all houses would at this time be laid waste, vv. 3, 4, but with the withdrawal of the divine peace there would be so many of the dead that the mourning customs and solemnities, the loud lamentations, the infliction of

wounds upon their own bodies, which was forbidden, it is true, Deut. xiv. 1, and the mourning bread (Ez. xxiv. 17, 22; Hos. ix. 4), would cease as a matter of course, vv. 5 b -7, and still more will all public rejoicing cease, ver. 9, vii. 34. In ver. 7 **לָהֶם** and **אוֹתָם** must refer to the mourning relatives for whom a feast was made to sympathize with and comfort them; in each of the second members we have the sing. for the sake of variety (see Vol. I., p. 71). Inasmuch as **לָהֶם** is required, we must suppose that **לָהֶם** has either been displaced, or that the phrase was intelligible without this addition, the latter supposition being the more probable.

2. If the nation desires to know the causes of such severe threats, they may be easily supplied: on account of the unfaithfulness of the fathers and of the still greater unfaithfulness of the sons, its banishment into a distant country has become necessary, where, wholly forsaken of Yahvé's presence and power,

it may then serve the national gods of the foreign land to whom it now so gladly pays service even in the holy land! vv. 10-13. Yes, a second deliverance of Israel from exile, still greater than that from Egypt, has become unhappily necessary with the exile itself and will in any case take place, vv. 14, 15; but

them !” | and I bring them back unto their soil which I gave unto their fathers. || —Behold I send for many fishers, saith Yahvé, who fish them then ; | and afterwards I will send for many hunters—who hunt them then from every high mountain and from every hill, and from the clefts of the rocks : || for mine eyes are upon all their ways, they are not hidden from me, | neither is their guilt concealed from mine eyes ; || and I recompense first double their guilt and their sin, | because they profaned my land, with the carcasses of their abominations and abhorrences they filled mine inheritance ! ||

## 3.

Yahvé my strength and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of need : | unto thee will Heathen come from the ends of the earth, and say “only lies did our fathers inherit, the  
20 Vanities—therein hath no one profit !” || Shall man make for himself Gods | since they are no Gods ? || —Therefore will I cause them to feel this time, cause them to feel my hand and  
xvii. my might, | so that they feel my name is Yahvé ! || The sin of  
1 Yuda is written with an iron graver, with a diamond point | —  
graven upon the table of their heart and the horns of their

what calamities must precede it, how terribly will the nation be drawn forth by a multitude of enemies, as by fishers that catch everything (Amos iv. 2) and then thrust away by another multitude of enemies, as by ruthless hunters, from all its dwellings and hiding places in the holy land (after Isa. vii. 19), that they may suffer the just punishment of the Omniscient One for their immolation of children and other abominable idolatries with which they polluted the holy land, vv. 16-18.

3. Since the causes of the threats are in this fashion still insufficiently elucidated, the discourse commences to explain them in another way. What feelings overpower the prophet when he thinks of the more distant future and how then the Heathen, tired of their false Gods, will of themselves come to

ראשונה, ver. 18, *formerly, before*, namely before the restoration to favour and deliverance mentioned vv. 14, 15 : but since it had already been established that the restoration to the reformed condition would bring back *double* the former prosperity, “Zech.” ix. 12 ; Job xlii. 10 ; “Isa.” xl. 2 ; lxi. 7, Yéremyá deems it here and xvii. 18 fitting to speak of a punishment doubly deserved ; and this is also conceivable as necessary.—שלח לִי, ver. 16, *to send to*, is the same as *to fetch*, to cause to come.

the true one ! ver. 19, after Isa. ii. 2-4. And as a fact nothing can be conceived as more foolish than idolatry, ver. 20, like ii. 11. Still the nation at present practises it : there is therefore nothing left but that Yahvé should once remind them with his chastising power of the truth which they so shamefully reject, ver.

altars; || as their sons remember their altars and their groves |  
 by the green tree, upon the high hills the mountains in the  
 field: || so thy substance, all thy treasures will I devote to the  
 spoil—without price, for thy sins in all thy borders, || and thou  
 wilt be torn alone from thine inheritance which I gave thee, |  
 and I cause thee to serve thine enemies in a land unknown to  
 thee: | for a fire have ye kindled in my nose that will burn for  
 5 ever! || —Thus saith Yahvé: Cursed be the man that trusteth  
 in mortals and maketh flesh his arm | while from Yahvé his  
 heart departeth: || he will be as a dry bush in the desert, and  
 not find that good cometh, | will inhabit scorched places in the  
 wilderness, a salt not habitable land! || Blessed be the man  
 that trusteth in Yahvé | and whose confidence is Yahvé: || he  
 will be as a tree planted by water, and by the brook will spread  
 out his roots, | will not find that heat cometh, but green are his  
 leaves, | and in the year of drought he will not pine, nor cease  
 from bearing fruit! ||

## 4.

More guileful is the heart than all things, and it is sullen: |  
 10 who knoweth it? || “I Yahvé that trieth the heart searcheth

21! alas, the sin and guilt of the nation is only too clear, written too plainly and deeply, both inwardly upon their own heart and outwardly upon the numerous idol-altars, xvii. 1, comp. xv. 13; xi. 13: as certainly as their sons, who were early of a corrupt mind, remember with only too great delight the infinite variety of the idolatries of their fathers and are unable to desist from them because they are written too deeply as it were in their heart (comp. for confirmation xlv. 17 sq.) will Yahvé send them, deprived of all their treasures, into exile for all these sins which have provoked an inappeasable anger within him! vv. 2-4, comp. xv. 13, 14. But happy for ever is only he who trusts in Yahvé alone (which the nation in its folly has for-

gotten), ver. 5-8, after Ps. i. 1-3. The end of the strophe recurs to its commencement. The words **הָרָרִי בַשָּׂדֶה**, ver. 3, must be connected with ver. 2, and the first be read **הָרָרִי**, acc. § 289 b. Instead of **בְּמַתִּיךְ בַּחֲטָאִתָּךְ** the reading of xv. 13, 14, **לֹא בְּמַתִּיךְ בַּחֲטָאִתָּךְ** must be adopted, and instead of **וּבֶךְ**, ver 4, **לְבָדָךְ** must be read with the LXX; we must then at the same time adopt the punctuation **שְׂמַמְתָּהּ** LXX ἀφαιρέσῃς (acc. to one reading). The figure of ver. 6 as well as the antithesis, ver. 8, necessarily requires that **עֲרַעֵר**, as well as the word **עֲרוֹעֵר**, xlviii. 6, should be taken as the name of a dry shrub of the desert.

4. The personal strophe is in this case, as might be expected from xv. 10, 11, 15-21, in a somewhat higher tone,

and begins also with a general truth. The human heart is indeed the most guileful and sullen thing that can be



the reins, | and render to the man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds!" || A hen that broodeth and hatcheth not—is he who getteth riches but not by right: | in the midst of his days will he leave them, and at his end be a fool. || —O thou exalted throne of glory from the Beginning, thou place of our sanctuary, thou hope of Israel Yahvé: || (all they that forsake thee will be ashamed, they that are unfaithful to thee in the earth will be disappointed, | that they forsook the spring of living water—Yahvé): || heal me Yahvé then I shall be healed, help me then I shall be helped: | for my hymn  
 15 of praise art thou! || Behold they say of me: | "where is the word of Yahvé? let it come then!" || but I withdrew myself neither as a shepherd from following thee, nor did I wish woeful day, thou knowest it! | the revelation of my lips was plain before thy face: || be not unto me a terror! | my refuge art thou in the day of evil; || may my persecutors be ashamed, but not I! may they be dismayed, but not I! | bring upon them the day of evil, and with a double destruction destroy them! ||

imagined, and will always justify itself against Yahvé even when it is quite wrong: but in vain! before Yahvé no guile and no sullen flight can avail, and like a hen which lays indeed her eggs and sits yet does not nevertheless get any young from them, but has to see them suddenly taken from her with the eggs themselves, is the foolish man who unjustly gains what nevertheless will never remain securely his, vv. 9-11. The whole almost entirely after Ps. xlix. 7 sq., xi. 4 sq.: only the figure of the hen is new, and perhaps evidence of the time when the domestic fowl was first introduced into Palestine.—The prophet always held aloof from such foolish desires and efforts: he is consequently able with all the greater fervour to cry for salvation unto the ancient, exalted seat of honour and indestructible sanctuary of Israel (although acc. ch. vii. sq. the earthly sanctuary will be destroyed), unto the eternal hope, unto Yahvé, to have forsaken whom ever caused shame and disgrace, unto him whom he had

constantly praised, vv. 12-14, comp. ii. 13; his enemies, it is true, ridiculed his threats, but with the consciousness that he has neither of his own will withdrawn from the responsible office of the shepherd, or prophet, nor ever wished for the threatened calamity from malicious joy in others' suffering, nor spoken anything false before Yahvé, he can confidently pray for protection and preservation, whilst to his enemies cleaves the twofold guilt of despising Yahvé and of ridiculing his threatenings, a twofold guilt which cannot remain without its consequences, vv. 15-18. With regard to *וְלֵהֵת* here and xix. 12, see § 351 c. Instead of *יִסּוּרִי*, ver. 13, it seems necessary to read *וְיִסּוּרִיךָ*, and instead of *יִכְתְּבוּ*, which scarcely yields a suitable meaning in this connexion, *יִפְלְמוּ*. Ver. 11, *קָרָא*, that which calls, is probably the laying hen, although the LXX consider the more definite *πέπδις*, partridge is meant; דָּגַר as Isa. xxxiv. 15; as to the Qāmess with Pashṭa, see § 138 a note. The

word **לְעֵדָה**, which is merely inserted ver. 16 between the two leading ideas **מֵאֲחֵרֵיָהּ**, obtains by degrees no more than the signification of a teacher of

a congregation, Ecc. xii. 11. With regard to the punctuation **הַכִּיָּא** as *imperat.*, see § 224 b.

### 6. *Further vain endeavours to reform the nation.*

#### Ch. XVII. 19—XX. 18.

Thus often and thus long had Yéremyá uttered the most serious threats and the worst forebodings: but in vain, the nation did not reform. Did he perhaps speak too severely, did he rather discourage than encourage by his perpetual threatenings? However that may be, he is not weary of exhorting the people simply to better things, and of repeatedly placing before them the eternal dividing of the way of life from the way of death, refraining from forebodings of evil. But how little these endeavours also to reform the people succeeded, how they brought upon him who had the best intentions, xviii. 20, only the basest persecutions, so that his discourse in spite of himself still in the end resounded again with the most dismal forebodings and the most righteous complaints, all this he explains in this piece, in which on that account some brief remarks in the form of narrative are introduced here and there, and his personal feelings are also properly expressed here in a more unrestrained and stronger manner than in the preceding piece. The prophet narrates (1) in one strophe, xvii. 19-27, that he once attached a purely admonitory discourse to that ancient law which contains one of the few fundamental thoughts of the higher religion, and in the voluntary observation of which the nature of the sanctification of the entire life may be recognized, namely, to the law of the Sabbath, which had been just then brought very vividly before the people by the book of Deuteronomy; all reference to prevailing sins is absent in this strophe, the pure two-edged truth is alone presented. But inasmuch as Yéremyá is accustomed subsequently to explain his words by some picture from life, he narrates (2) ch.

xviii. in three strophes, that he illustrated by means of a very unpretending symbol the truth that Yahvé can form or transform either to good or to evil any nation according as it gives heed to his words, and that for these well-meant discourses also he met with the most bitter opposition, and, indeed, persecution; so that (3) he was now compelled to make use of evil figures and symbols to show the overthrow of the incorrigible nation, an overthrow which was necessary in the sight of Yahvé, and thereby provoked fresh persecution, ch. xix.-xx., in three strophes. In this way our piece supplies a series of deeds and experiences of the prophet, which appear to him to be connected together in a higher point of view, and as regards their date certainly did not take place before the later years of his life. It was said above, pp. 77, 89, that the longer heading, which at present stands xviii. 1, in all probability stood originally before xvii. 19, the smaller one, xvii. 19, on the other hand, before xviii. 1.—There might have been after the first of the three sections of this piece a narrative of the bad reception which the discourse found, as is the case after the second and third sections: if it originally existed, some two strophes have been lost at this point. But this supposition cannot be further substantiated, unless support is found for it in the mention the prophet makes, xviii. 20, of an earnest intercession that he had previously made for the nation, which does not quite suit ch. xiv., xv.

The word which came unto Yéremyá from Yahvé in this wise:

### I. *The Sabbath.*

Ch. xvii. 19-27.

xvii.

- 19 Go and step into the gate of the sons of the people whereby the kings of Yuda go out and in, and into all gates of Jerusalem, || and say unto them: Hear Yahvé's word ye kings of Yuda and all Yuda and all inhabitants of Jerusalem, that go through these gates: || thus saith Yahvé: Take heed with
- 20

your souls and raise no burden on the Sabbath day | that ye bring it into the gates of Jerusalem! || nor shall ye get out of your houses a burden on the Sabbath day, or do any business, | but hallow ye the Sabbath as I commanded your fathers: || but they hearkened not and did not incline their ear, | hardened their neck in order not to hear and to receive no correction. || Yet if ye indeed hearken unto me, saith Yahvé, to bring no burden into the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, | and to hallow the Sabbath, and to do no business thereon: ||  
 25 then shall enter into the gates of this city kings and princes that sit upon David's throne, riding in chariots and upon horses, they their princes the man of Yuda and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, | and this city will remain for ever; || and there will come from the cities of Yuda and from the surroundings of Jerusalem and from the land of Benjamin, from the plain and from the mountain and from the South those that bring burnt-offering and sacrifice and gift and incense | and that bring thanksgiving to the house of Yahvé. || But if ye hearken not unto me to hallow the Sabbath and to raise no burden nor to enter into the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day: | then I kindle fire in the gates thereof, which devoureth Jerusalem's palaces unquenchably.||

It is intelligible enough that Yéremyá should go, for the purpose of proclaiming the necessity of solemnising the Sabbath, precisely to those places where the manner of its observance may be most easily witnessed, to the busy markets or gates of the city. At the same time, inasmuch as the promise of prosperity in the case of a conscientious observance of the period of rest, vv. 24-26, is intended to have special reference to the kings of the Davidic stock, the welfare of these kings being as things then were at the same time the welfare of the entire kingdom, that gate, ver. 19, at which the kings made their entrance and exit is named rather than any of the others, the gate which they therefore visit most for purposes of business and where they are most frequently present. Accordingly שַׁעַר

בְּנֵי עַם must necessarily be the name of this particular gate, just as Yéremyá in such cases names elsewhere other special gates, vii. 2; xix. 2. But since the temple-gate is mentioned under entirely different names in similar passages, vii. 2; xix. 14; xxvi. 2; xxxvi. 10, and the palace-gate (where, moreover, no great amount of business would be transacted) cannot be intended by the above name, the only gate that remains is that of Benjamin, where acc. xxxviii. 7, the kings are accustomed to sit in judgment and thereby transact their chief business, which is, however, a different gate from that near which was the place of punishment for the guilty in the temple, xx. 2; and we must either read בְּנֵי עַם instead of עַם בְּנֵי עַם, or the name signifies the gate of the citizens, of the popular assembly (Gen.



xxiii. 11), where the parliament of the people and the courts of justice were held; yet the latter is less probable as far as customary terminology is con-

cerned, comp. xxvi. 23; Ez. vii. 27. The words of ver. 27 almost entirely following Amos i. 4.

## II. *The first symbol, with a favourable meaning.*

### Ch. xviii.

xviii.

1.

- 2 Thus said Yahvé unto me: Arise—and go down into the house of the potter, and there will I make known my words unto thee! || So I went down into the house of the potter, and behold he wrought over the two disks; || and the vessel was spoilt which he made, in the potter's hand, | so he made again another vessel, as it seemed right to the potter to make it. || —
- 5 And Yahvé's word came unto me thus: || Like this potter can I not do unto you, house of Israel? saith Yahvé; | behold as the clay in the potter's hand so are ye in my hand, house of Israel! || Now I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, | to root up and pluck up and destroy it: || but if that nation turneth from its evil concerning which I spoke, | I repent of the evil which I had thought to do unto it. || And then I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, |
- 10 to build up and to plant it: || but if it doeth evil before mine eyes, that it hearkeneth not unto my voice, | then I repent of the good which I had said I meant to show unto it. ||

1. Without doubt Yéremyá had at some time seen with his own eyes in the workshop, situated in the valley, of a potter at Jerusalem how easily the skilled artificer can shape and reshape a vessel; and as to the genuine prophet especially any uncommon thing which he sees in the world becomes a suggestion and symbol of the higher truths that are always influencing him, he had accordingly recognized in this fact the ease with which the Divine finger can give this or that shape to whole nations,

can destroy or resuscitate them, just as each nation follows willingly or not the Divine counsel granted to it for its good. It appeared at this time to him that he had visited the workshop of the potter in pursuance of the Divine command, in order that he might clearly show to the people by means of such a symbol this twofold power of Yahvé, vv. 2-10. With regard to the *two disks*, ver. 3, comp. Raumer's *Antiquarische Briefe*, p. 75.\* The clause וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ—וְנִשְׁחָת, ver.

\* The English reader may consult Gesenius's *Thesaurus*, s.v. נִבְּן and Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, art. *Potter*.—Tr.

## 2.

Now therefore say thou to the man of Yuda and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in this wise: Thus saith Yahvé: behold I form concerning you an evil and devise concerning you a device! | O turn ye every one from his evil way, and make your ways and deeds good! || But they say "it is in vain! | but our own thoughts will we follow, and every one the stubbornness of his evil heart will we do!" || Therefore thus saith Yahvé: Ask ye now the Heathen! who hath heard such things? | very horrible things hath the virgin Israel done! || Moveth then from the rock of the fields the snow of Lebanon? | or will rushing bubbling flowing waters be cut off, || that my people forgot me, to the Nonentities burn incense | and these cause them to stumble in their ways—the eternal paths, to go footpaths—ways not prepared, || —to render their land an astonishment, an eternal hissing, | that every one passing by it is astonished and shaketh his head, || as the east wind I scatter them before the enemy, | them turned backwards and not forwards I behold on the day of their distress! ||

4, is the continuation of **הִנֵּה עֲשֵׂה**, ver. 3, acc. § § 342b, 357a. The word **כַּחֲמֹר**, ver. 4, must be omitted, with the LXX (which, however, leaves out

the following words as well), as superfluous and indeed confusing in this connexion and as subsequently introduced from ver. 6. Vv. 7-10 after i. 10.

2. The application thereof to the present condition of the nation is made by the second strophe. The symbol is not properly intended to convey a bad signification, nor is it thus explained. It is true, Israel is in such a condition that Yahvé must think of punishing it, yet if this very danger has the effect of inducing it the more earnestly to strive simply after what is good, Yahvé may then, according to the foregoing symbol, still transform it into something good and restore the spoilt vessel by a fresh formation of it, ver. 11. But, alas, they will not listen to such well-meant exhortations, and imagine that it is in vain (ii. 25) thus to exhort them, ver. 12: accordingly Yahvé must bitterly complain over a nation of such unexampled

ingratitude and folly: just as little as the refreshing snow of Lebanon, *i.e.*, in exact contrast to the snow which may fall elsewhere in Palestine but immediately disappear again (Prov. xxv. 13; xxvi. 1; Job xxiv. 19), the *lasting* almost *eternal* snow, moves from the highest summit of this mountain, or as little as living waters springing with an incessant upbreking force from the heart of the earth can be cut off or destroyed by force, ought Israel to depart from him and forget him with whom it is properly most inseparably connected and united, and who is at the same time its eternal refreshment, from its ancient and true God! and yet it has suffered itself to be torn from him and to be misled by vain idols from the

## 3.

Then said they, "Come and let us devise devices against Yéremyá! for doctrine will not fail the priest counsel the wise and an oracle the prophet; | come and let us smite him through the tongue, and not give heed unto any of his words!" || —O give heed Yahvé unto me, | and hearken unto the voice of mine opponents! || shall then for good evil be recompensed, that they dug a hole for my life? | remember how I stood before thee to speak concerning them good, to turn from them thy wrath! || Therefore deliver their sons to the famine, and surrender them to the hands of the sword! | and let their wives be made childless and widows, and let their husbands be slain of death, their youth be smitten by the sword in battle! || let a cry be heard from their houses that thou bringest sudden troops upon them, | —because they dug a hole to take me, and hid snares for my feet! || — Yet thou Yahvé knowest all their deadly plots against me! | forgive not their guilt, and their sin blot not out before thee, | let them be overthrown before thee, at the time of thy wrath deal with them! ||

ancient and approved ways unto unmade footpaths (Prov. xii. 28), vv. 13-15—only in order that its land may become waste and an object of general derision of mankind, in order that Yahvé may scatter them into all parts of the earth and unmoved behold them in captivity and flight, for that is the necessary consequence of such folly! vv. 16, 17, comp. xix. 8; Lev. xxvi. 33; Deut. xxxii. 35. *The rock of the fields* is as appropriate as a poetical name for the summit of Lebanon as *the fields of the forest*, Ps. cxxxii. 6, for the less elevated fruitful districts of this mountain range. קר cannot stand here for קר cold, because this idea is foreign in this clause; it is from קר, מקר, comp. vi. 7; on the other hand, זר cannot

here be derived from זר, inasmuch as the meaning *strange* would supply no proper sense, but it stands for זר, as the root זר expresses the idea of pushing, pressing, just as the Arabic *zarar* bears also the related signification of something sharp, biting; for the discourse cannot here find words enough to describe an outbreaking spring of water which cannot in any way be repressed, but keeps breaking forth with an irrepressible force; being understood thus, it is unnecessary to read זרים instead of זרים. But what had been said partly in the same and partly in other figures of the same force, ii. 13, 31, is only repeated here in these powerful figures.

3. But what a bad reception the people gave to this well-meant discourse of the prophet, is shown in the third strophe: they evidently intended to lay a fatal snare for him by secret defama-

tion of him before the king (by the tongue, ver. 18), thinking that though he fell there would still be prophets as well as priests and wise men enough whom they could ask for counsel, and

it was precisely this inconvenient prophet with his words whom they did not need! ver. 18. Yet Yéremyá, with all the greater urgency, turns against this to Yahvé with an explanation of the true position, vv. 19, 20, and with the prayer for just punishment, vv. 21, 22, with difficulty finding rest in the thought of his omniscience, ver. 23. *How I stood before thee*, ver. 20, made intercession before thee

as a prophet, with a somewhat different sense from xv. 19; *death*, ver. 21, as here placed in contrast with other kinds of death, is the most terrible form of death, pestilence, as xv. 2, comp. further Ps. lxiii. 11 and my *Johanneische Schriften*, II., p. 139; the *troops*, ver. 22, hostile companies of warriors engaged in plunder, as Yéremyá had often threatened, comp. xv. 8, 9.

### III. Other symbols, with an unfavourable meaning.

#### Ch. xix., xx.

xix.

1.

- 1 Thus said Yahvé: Go and buy a potter's *emptying-vessel* of earthenware, take then of the elders of the people and of the elders of the priests, || and go forth into the *valley of Ben-Hinnom* which is outside the earthenware-gate, and proclaim there the words which I will speak unto thee, || and say: Hear ye Yahvé's word ye kings of Yuda and inhabitants of Jerusalem! | thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: Behold I bring an evil upon this place of which whoever heareth his ears shall tingle! || Because that they forsook me and made this place strange and burnt incense in it unto other gods whom neither they nor their fathers knew, | after the kings of Yuda had filled this place with the blood of Innocents, || and had built the Heights of Báal to burn their sons  
5 in the fire as sacrifices unto Báal, | which I have neither commanded nor spoken nor hath it come into my mind: || therefore behold days come (saith Yahvé) —and this place will no more be called Tophet and valley of Ben-Hinnom | but *valley of the slaughter*! || I *empty* on the ground\* the counsel of Yuda and Jerusalem in this place, and cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by those that seek their life | and give their carcasses for meat to the fowls of heaven and to the beasts of the earth, || make this city an astonishment and a hissing, | that every one that passeth by it is astonished and hisseth at all its plagues, || and cause them to eat the flesh of

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\* The Germ. *giesse—in den sand*, the addition *in den sand* being made to the verb to convey the idea of rendering the counsel absolutely futile.—Tr.



their sons and the flesh of their daughters, they eat every one the flesh of the other | in the distress and straitness which their opponents and their deadly enemies prepare for them. ||

10 — So do thou break the emptying vessel before the eyes of the men that go with thee || and say unto them: Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts! Even so will I break this nation and this city, | and in Tophet will men bury so that there remaineth no place to bury! || As one breaketh the potter's vessel that cannot be mended, so will I do unto this place (saith Yahvé) and its inhabitants, | and make this city as Tophet, || that the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Yuda may be polluted like the place Tophet, | yea all the houses upon the roofs of which they burnt incense to the whole host of heaven and poured drink-offerings to strange gods. ||

1. Since the first well-meant symbol produced such a bad effect that its result proved precisely the total incorrigibility of the nation at that time, Yéremyá was able shortly afterwards to speak from the basis of another symbol, which though it was not very different in kind from the first conveyed an entirely different meaning. He takes an earthen vessel, a kind of pitcher for emptying or pouring out water, purchased of a potter whose business it is to make only very fragile earthen wares (הֶרֶשׁ), that he may break it in pieces publicly as a spoilt unsatisfactory vessel in the same manner as Yahvé must now break in pieces this incorrigible nation, vv. 10, 11; further, the sight of this *emptying* vessel readily suggests the allied idea that Yahvé will now make the nation in its need empty and poor in counsel, accordingly as easily *empty* out and annul all its good counsel and purpose as the water of a bottle is emptied, ver. 7, after Isa. xix. 3. But as this symbolical action is by itself somewhat meagre, another is connected with it. Precisely at that place which had witnessed the worst crimes of the nation, those of the sacrifice of innocent children devoted to

Báal or Moloch, at the place *Tophet* (the Stake, comp. *ante* p. 131) in the valley of Ben-Hinnom (comp. as regards its locality *History of Israel*, III. 255 (III. 348, 3rd Ed.)), he explains this symbol and promises in view of this decisive place that the beautiful valley that had witnessed such abominations will soon, at the arrival of the great period of judgment, be covered and polluted by innumerable corpses (vii. 32), yea, will receive the new name of the *Valley of Battle* on account of the fatal battle occurring there, vv. 2, 6, 11, comp. vii. 32; the last member of ver. 11, if it is genuine (the LXX leaves it out) must be transposed. This double symbol, thus interwoven, Yéremyá had undoubtedly at some time announced in this solitary place outside the city to some persons whom he had taken with him for this purpose, vv. 1, 10, and then, full of the truth which had come forth from it, repeated it aloud in the Temple before the whole assembled people, as the second strophe shows. But when he now calls up into recollection the event and it seems to him as if Yahvé had from the first commanded him to act thus in every particular, he throws the words which he

## 2.

Then came Yéremyá from Tophet whither Yahvé had sent him to prophesy, and took his stand in the court of the house of Yahvé, and said to all the people: | Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: behold I bring upon this city and upon all her cities all the evil which I have spoken concerning her, | because they hardened their neck, in order not to hear my words! || — And Pashchur the son of Immer the priest, when he was chief officer in the house of Yahvé, heard Yéremyá prophesy these words: || then Pashchur punished Yéremyá the prophet and put him in the rack-house which was at the upper Benjamin's gate by the house of Yahvé. || But the next day Pashchur brought forth Yéremyá from the rack-house: and Yéremyá said unto him: Not *Pashchur* [*Joy-roundabout*] doth Yahvé name thee, but *Terror-all-around*! || For thus saith Yahvé: behold I make thee a terror unto thyself and unto all thy friends, that they fall by the sword whilst thine eyes look on; | and all Yuda will I give into the hand of the king of Babel, that he may carry them captive unto Babel and smite them with the sword; || and I give all the stores of this city and all its means and all its magnificence | and all treasures of the kings of Yuda I give into their enemies' hand, that they

first spoke in the valley in the presence of a few at once into the form which they took when he spoke subsequently in the Temple, vv. 3-9, and only at the end supplies in a stricter form the manner in which he spoke at first, vv. 10-13: by this means the first strophe became somewhat too long. The name of the *Gate of Pottery* (broken earthenware) *הַחֲרֹסוֹת* *K'ṭhbb*, ver. 2, which does not occur elsewhere, is explained by the similar name of the *Dung Gate*: both names were probably in use at the same time and had the same sense, only that here the one used suits the symbol better than the other,

Neh. iii. 14. A better sense is obtained vv. 4, 5, if the *ר* is omitted, with the LXX, before *מַלְכֵי*, the next two clauses being then considered subordinate in respect of time, as if here importance were attached to the fact that the rest had only followed the example of their kings Ahaz, Manassah, and Amôn. Ver. 9 after Dent. xxviii. 53; ver. 13, since the art. before *טַמָּאִים* is not permissible, the proper reading is probably *הַתַּפְּתִיחַ*, after Isa. xxx. 33; further, comp. Ssep. i. 14, 15. With regard to *לֵב* before *כָּל*, only freely rendered above, see §. 310 a.

2. In the second strophe, after he has barely indicated, vv. 14, 15, in explanation of ver. 3, that he had thus spoken to the same effect in the Temple

before all the people, Yéremyá hastens to narrate the consequences of so doing, which were for him personally so painful. He was sent on account of these threat-

spoil them and take them and bring them unto Babel. || But thou Pashchur and all inhabitants of thy house—ye will go into captivity; | and to Babel wilt thou come, and there die and there be buried, | thou with all thy friends to whom thou hast prophesied falsely! ||

## 3.

- 14 Cursed be the day on which I was born, | that day my mother bore me let it not be blessed! || cursed be the man who gladly told the tidings to my father saying “a man child is born unto thee!” | making him very glad: || but may that

ening discourses by the chief overseer of the Temple (comp. xxix. 26), especially as this priest considered himself a prophet, ver. 6, to a rack-house, which was situated near *the upper* (i.e. that which was placed higher up, and therefore different from that mentioned, xvii. 19) *Benyamin's*, or North, Gate of the Temple, there to suffer for a day severely enough, xx. 1, 2. For there can be no doubt that *מהפכת* both here and xxix. 26; 2 Chron. xvi. 10, is meant as a kind of *rack*, from *הפך*, to twist, like *tormentum* from *torquere*; Symmachus had already seen this. But Yéremyá was so far from permitting this most painful punishment to restrain him from uttering the truth, that (like Amos vii. 16, 17) he at once turned specially against his tormentor the same threat that he had before spoken in general terms, and repeats the whole with increased definiteness, vv. 3-6. And as in the principal discourse the name Tophet had been changed into another in accordance with the

divine intentions, so this discourse against Pashchur forthwith begins with a similar transformation: his name seems to signify *Joy* (*פֶּשֶׁת* or *פֶּשֶׁשׁ* from *פִּישׁ* to spring, leap, rejoice, Mal. iii. 20) *round about* (as if *חור* had the sound of *חול* Arabic *haul*, comp. the transliteration *Πασχώρ* of the LXX), but it ought on the contrary to be *Terror round about*, because he both causes terror to others, e.g., the prophet, comp. ver. 10 in the third strophe, and also, which is here the chief point, will be on the great day of judgment to himself and his friends a terror, and will be greatly terrified at the calamities of his infatuated followers; and in this paronomasia the word *מַבְרַר* is chosen because it rhymes with the last syllable of *פֶּשֶׁחֹר*.—When the LXX, ver. 2, have *ἀποτεταγμένον* instead of *בְּנִימָן*, it is probable that they read *בְּנִימָן*; but there is no great use in referring to the priests' names mentioned Neh. xii. 17, 41.

3. As Yéremyá now at last, vv. 7-18, gives way again to his personal feelings, he has most reason, just as he has been calling to mind the monstrous, painful, and shameful persecution which he was compelled to endure, to give vent to bitter complaint, and, quite in the manner of Job, to curse the day of his

birth, vv. 14-18, invoking at the same time evil, as to his bitterest enemy, upon the man who with great joy and in expectation of a present brought the first news of his birth to his father, vv. 15, 16, comp. *בִּרְדֵּךְ*, xviii. 22, and vividly picturing to himself how much better it would be had his birth-day

- man be as the cities which Yahvé overthrew without ruth, |  
 hear an outcry in the morning and wacry at midday— || that  
 he slew me not from the womb, and my mother became to me  
 my grave—or her womb had always been great! || Wherefore  
 then came I forth from the womb, in order to see toil and  
 7 sorrow, | and my days were consumed in shame! || — Thou  
 enticedst me Yahvé and I let myself be enticed, seizedst me—  
 and prevailedst; | I became a laughing-stock daily, every one  
 mocketh me: || for as often as I speak I complain, of wrong  
 and violence I cry, | that Yahvé's word became unto me a  
 scorn and reproach daily. || But if I say, "I will not call it to  
 mind, and not speak any more in his name:" | it is in my heart  
 like burning fire, an oppression in my bones, | and I am weary  
 10 of holding out, and cannot bear it. || — I heard indeed the  
 defaming of many, terror round about: | "denounce and let  
 us denounce him!" my covenanted friends lie in wait for  
 my fall, | "perhaps he will be enticed that we may prevail  
 against him, and take our revenge upon him!" || but Yahvé is  
 with me as a mighty hero: | therefore will my persecutors  
 stumble and not prevail; | already they are greatly ashamed  
 that they had no success, with an everlasting disgrace not to  
 be forgotten. || And thou Yahvé of Hosts that trieth the  
 righteous and seeth the reins and heart: may I see thy revenge  
 upon them, for upon thee have I thrown my cause! || Sing  
 unto Yahvé, praise Yahvé, | that he hath delivered the soul of  
 the helpless from the hand of evildoers! ||

been also his dying-day, or (—), § 352 a) if even his mother had never brought forth, had only perpetually conceived, ver. 17. Yet in the next moment he reflects, that if he has been enticed by some one into this unhappy position of being compelled perpetually to complain of severe persecution, he has still been brought to this by no one else than Yahvé himself and his resistless arm (xv. 16; Isa. viii. 11), and that, even if he might desire it, he can never cease from thinking of Yahvé or withdraw from his service, the very thought of such an attempt creating within him the most insufferable anguish, as if a

fire burnt within him, or as if his bones were violently pressed (a beautiful representation of the inability of the true prophet to act against the distinct voice from above!) vv. 7-9; instead of עָצַר it is probably better to read עָצַר, although עָצַר as a verb signifies with צָ to press, the noun accords better with the structure of the verse-members. Let his secret enemies, therefore, lie in wait for him, entice and threaten him with accusations and calumnies as much as they like, ver. 10, comp. Ps. xxxi. 14; xxxv. 15; xxxviii. 18; xli. 10, he cannot with Yahvé as his friend despair amidst all the plots of his enemies, but



full of faith, yea, jubilant and happy, prays to him for help, vv. 11-13.

We have here again a plain and important instance of transposition. The verses placed and numbered in the present text as vv. 14-18 have no meaning as following vv. 7-13, while they cannot be conceived as standing alone, since when taken by themselves they are unworthy of a prophet: on the other hand, they yield the best meaning if placed before ver. 7. Comp. the in every respect similar instance, xv. 10, 11. The inducement for the transposition of these two passages particularly was doubtless supplied by the special circumstance that they did not appear to some of their earliest readers as quite worthy of a prophet, and accordingly were left out by some copyists, or placed in the

margin, and subsequently inserted by others at an unsuitable place.

It is evidently not accidental that the sixth as well as the foregoing fifth piece closes with an outburst of the personal feelings of the prophet. He closed the second of these pieces, vi. 27-30, with a similar, though much loftier, reference to himself; and if the third and fourth were intended, in conformity with their plan, to close with purely Messianic thoughts, yet even in them similar personal lamentations occur towards the beginning, ix. 1 sq.; xi. 18—xii. 3. It appears, therefore, from these observations also that the pieces of the book and its entire arrangement must be accepted as has been above indicated, and that it is certain that the whole comes from the same author.

### 7. *The Guides of the Nation.*

#### Ch. XXI.—XXIV.

Towards the end of Ssedeqia's reign, when the Chaldeans had already commenced the siege of the city, Yéremyá, called upon by the king himself to do so, found a suitable opportunity to express his view of the future both of the entire kingdom and particularly of the royal house and the magnates and guides of the nation. At this point in his book he makes use of the occasion to bring together all the most weighty utterances that he had ever publicly delivered concerning the leaders and guides of the nation, both the kings and secular princes as well as the prophets and priests. For precisely at this point, when the discourses of severe threats and admonitions are about to end, there is the most suitable place for such a collection. In the end it is especially the shepherds of this flock, the secular and ecclesiastical leaders, particularly the kings with their ministers, on the one hand, and the priests (xxiii. 11, 33, 34) but still more the prophets, on the other, that are

responsible for all the moral perversities and perils of the nation, which have been so fully explained in previous discourses. It is also equally certain that a lasting reform of the nation can proceed only from a thorough reform of its leaders themselves. Therefore the series of castigatory discourses also rises at the end to these more distant but none the less powerful causes of the present great calamities; the axe is laid at the root of the rotten tree, and it is here for the first time fully evident how little Yéremyá feared clearly to express everywhere and at all times the pure truth, even against those who were in power and the influential false prophets.

This important and lengthy piece accordingly falls of itself primarily into two parts, namely, the discourses concerning the kings and those concerning the prophets. In the section concerning the kings, xxi. 1—xxiii. 8, the first two strophes explain simply how Yéremyá, taking advantage of this most recent opportunity, spoke both against the counsellors of Ssedeqia and himself and the royal house; the next two strophes then go back into the past and collect the utterances, partly lamentations and partly castigations, which he had publicly made as occasioned by the three earlier kings, until the fifth strophe concludes all that has to be said regarding the royal house with further thoughts of a more general character, and also with the eternal Messianic hopes, hopes which notwithstanding all previous perversities still always cling to this house. This discourse confines itself to the four last kings, *i.e.*, those succeeding Yosia, since they were all very different from that far greater king both as regards their mental tendencies and the short duration of their reigns, and thus properly represent the rapid decline of all kingly power in Jerusalem.—Four strophes of the second section, xxiii. 9-40, then speak with very special warmth and the most serious emphasis, as if the prophet were precisely here in his most proper sphere, concerning the false prophets, who have so long laboured most disastrously in misleading the magnates and the nation; and

nothing can be more appropriate than the way in which the prophet in the first two strophes overwhelms the false prophets and their followers, nothing more penetrating than the skill with which in the two last he refutes with cutting words the objections and false ideas of both. With this the chief matter of the great piece is exhausted: but inasmuch as Yéremyá at other times likes to give at the end additional examples and symbols by way of confirmation, he appends here also in a third part, ch. xxiv., just as Amos does, ch. vii.-viii., a further narrative concerning a vision that he once received upon the condition of the kingdom, and which may serve fully to confirm what had been said at length above regarding the leaders of the nation.

The piece concerning the prophets, xxiii. 9-40, may be easily recognized both from its language and its subject-matter as belonging to the second edition.

### I.—Concerning the Kings.

Ch. XXI. 1—XXIII.-8.

xxi.

- 1 The word which came to Yéremyá from Yahvé when the king Ssedeqia sent Pashchur Ben-Malkia and the priest Ssephanya Ben-Maaseya to him with the words: "enquire now for us of Yahvé, because Nabukodrossor king of Babel maketh war against us, whether perhaps Yahvé will deal with us according to all his marvels that he withdraw from us!" Then said Yéremyá unto them: thus shall ye say unto Ssedeqia: Thus saith Yahvé God of Israel: Behold I turn back the weapons of war in your hand, wherewith ye make war against the king of Babel and the Chaldeans that besiege you outside  
5 the city, | and assemble them in the midst of this city || and I myself make war against you with outstretched hand and with strong arm, | and with anger and with fury and with great wrath, || and I smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast, | by a great pestilence shall they die! || and afterward (saith Yahvé) will I deliver Ssedeqia the king of

Yuda and his servants and the people which are left in this city from the pestilence and from the sword and from the famine into the hand of Nabukodrossor king of Babel and into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those that mortally hate them, | that he may smite them with the edge of the sword, not spare nor pity nor compassionate them. ||

And unto this people thou shalt say: thus saith Yahvé: | Behold I put before you the way of life and the day of death: || he that dwelleth in this city will die by the sword and by the famine and by the pestilence, | but he that forsaketh it and falleth to the Chaldeans who besiege you, will live and will  
 10 have his life as prey; || for I set my face against this city for evil not for good (saith Yahvé), into the hand of the king of Babel will it be given and he will burn it with fire. || — And concerning the house of the king of Yuda hear ye Yahvé's word: || house of David! thus saith Yahvé: award every morning justice, and deliver the spoiled from the hand of the oppressor, | lest like fire my fury go forth and burn with none to quench it—at the wickedness of your deeds! || — Behold I will thee thou inhabitant\* of the valley, of the rock of the plain! (saith Yahvé) | ye who say “who cometh down upon us, and who entereth our hiding-places?” || — I visit you according to the fruit of your deeds (saith Yahvé), | and kindle a fire in your forest, so that it devoureth everything round about it! ||

1. The event which is only just referred to, ver. 1 sq. is narrated at length ch. xxxvii, where, however, instead of the temporal prince Pashchur (who is quite a different person from the priest, xx. 1) another of the princes who were unfavourable to the prophet is named, comp. xxxviii. 1, 4; with regard to the powerful priest Ssefanya, see xxix. 25. It appears from that narrative and the words of this piece, vv. 2-4, that the application was made when the Chaldeans had only commenced the siege at a distance,

while the besieged were still able to risk sallies and encounters outside the gates, and the Egyptian auxiliaries were advancing in the distance against the Chaldeans. Accordingly the war party might hope that Jerusalem would again be delivered in as wonderful a manner as it was in the time of Yesaya, ver. 2, and plainly they applied to Yéremyá for no other object than to obtain the support of his reputation for this unreasonable expectation. But the prophet, undeceived by such wishes, simply obeying the truth which had long been

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\* *Betrügerin* must be a misprint for *Bürgerin*, which is the word used in the first edition.—*Tr.*



## 2.

xxii.

- 1 Thus saith Yahvé: go down to the house of the king of Yuda, and speak there these words, || and say: Hear Yahvé's word thou king of Yuda that sitteth upon David's throne, |

fully established in his own mind, promised the exact opposite of such baseless hopes: the arms of the people who now ventured outside the city would soon be driven back into the city, Yahvé himself not fighting for but against them, vv. 5, 6, and at last the king with his servants and people, *i.e.*, his subjects of higher and lower rank (xxii. 2, 4; xxxvi. 24; xxxvii. 2, comp. xxiv. 8; xxv. 19), therefore with all the inhabitants of the city that will have been spared from the previous calamities, will fall into the hands of the enemy, ver. 7. It is better to follow the LXX by omitting the **וְאֶת** before **הַנְּשָׂאִים**, ver. 7, as in Yéremyá's language king, servants, (*i.e.*, officials), and people constitute the whole nation.

But in the prophet's book his discourse immediately assumes larger proportions, and, without reference to the situation which has just been described, what may have shortly afterwards been said to the assembled people (comp. xxxviii. 1 sq.) is at once subjoined: to

2. That which could not very well be pursued further in the previous comprehensive strophe, and had therefore been only briefly touched upon, vv. 11, 12, is now, xxii. 1-9, expressly further dwelt upon: the genuine prophetic admonition directed immediately to the entire royal family, and specially to the king who was then reigning (hence, ver. 4, the plur. finally changes into the sing.).

the nation will now be given by Yahvé the choice, in quite another sense than Deut. xxx. 15, between life and death, that is, only the fatal choice either to remain in the city to die there or to fall away to the Chaldean monarch to preserve at least life as a prey, vv. 8-10; the royal house will be able to save itself (not by unfaithfulness to the covenant, but) only by uninterrupted and active endeavour after perfect righteousness in the state, vv. 11, 12, but Jerusalem, both the lower (the valley, Isa. xxii. 5) and the upper city (the rock of the plain, comp. xviii. 14), which proud city imagined it could not now be conquered by any enemy (the lower city imagined no one could descend to it from the surrounding fortified castles,\* the upper city, that no one would enter its secure recesses!), will be chastised according to her deserts, vv. 13, 14. Thus the strophe recurs with vv. 13, 14 to its commencement, ver. 4.

Yéremyá had accordingly gone down (from the upper temple court, xx. 2) to the royal castle to proclaim there the truth that the well-being of the royal house also rested only in the universal divine righteousness that had been so urgently commended by the book of Deuteronomy, vv. 1-5 (and such admonition had not been entirely fruitless, comp. ch. xxxiv); it is true that the

\* The first edition has *bergen*, hills, which may be the true reading.—*Tr.*

thou with thy servants and people that come through these gates: || thus saith Yahvé: Do ye justice and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled from the hand of the oppressor! | and strangers orphans and widows oppress not hurt not, and innocent blood shed not in this place! || For if ye really do this word, | then will come through the gates of this house kings that sit for David upon his throne, riding in chariots and on  
 5 horses, he himself and his servants and people; || but if ye hear not these words, | by myself I swear (saith Yahvé), that a desolation will this house become! || — For thus saith Yahvé concerning the house of the king of Yuda: thou that art unto me Gilead, the head of Lebanon | —verily I make thee a desert, uninhabited cities, || and consecrate against thee destroyers, every one with his weapons: | who then cut down thy best cedars and fell them for fire! || And many nations then pass by this city | and say one to the other, “wherefore hath Yahvé done thus unto this great city?” || then they answer: because they forsook the covenant of Yahvé their God | and did homage unto strange Gods and served them! ||

royal house is in the eyes of Yahvé himself as noble and magnificent as even Gilead and Lebanon with their splendid summits and forests, but even Lebanon and Gilead's splendour, their tall cedars, may easily fall before the same Yahvé; and if the royal house of David, with its cedar palaces (which are also briefly called Lebanon, see on Isa. xxii. 8, Vol. ii. p. 163) and all the other similar lofty palaces cannot be separated in thought from Jerusalem, the proper destroyers (the Chaldeans) of all that splendour in Jerusalem also have already been appointed by Yahve, vv. 6, 7 (comp. vv. 14, 15, 20, 23; Isa. x. 33, 34; xxxvii. 24; Zech. xi. 1, 2), so that in the future, when Jerusalem has been destroyed, and lies like desert cities the exact opposite of the prophecy, Isa. ii. 2-4, must happen, vv. 8, 9.

Inasmuch as in what follows the three

kings that preceded Ssedeqia are the subject of the discourse, and Ssedeqia had already been briefly referred to, xxi. 11, 12, it might be supposed that these words, xxii. 1-9, were addressed to Yosia. However, we have nothing here peculiarly applicable to this king with his exceptional characteristics; and Yere-myá was during his reign probably too young and as yet without sufficient public reputation to address him in such words. Moreover, he had mourned his death in a distinct work (see *History of Israel*, iv. 242, iii. 763), so that he so far says nothing about him here. We must, therefore, suppose that this strophe, vv. 1-9, is intended simply to expand what had been said in the former one, xxi. 11, 12, and vv. 13. 14. Besides, Yosia is plainly referred to in the words xxii. 15, 16, as an entirely different king.

## 3.

10 Weep ye not for a dead man, nor bemoan him ! | much more weep for him that is gone away that he returneth no more and seeth his native land ! || for thus saith Yahvé of Shallûm son of Yosia king of Yuda who reigned instead of his father Yosia, who hath been led away from this place : | he returneth thither no more, || but there whither they have led him away will he die | and this land he will see no more ! ||

Oh he that buildeth his house with unrighteousness, and his upper rooms with injustice, | on his neighbour putteth labour for nought, and giveth him not his wages ; || who saith, “ I will build me a many storied house and airy upper-rooms ! ” | and painteth for himself the windows, wainscoteth with cedar and  
15 coloureth with vermilion : || Wilt thou reign when thou rivalest Ahaz ? | thy father—ate he not and drank, did justice and righteousness—so it was well with him ? || conducted the cause of the suffering and helpless—so it was well ? | is not that to know me, saith Yahvé ? || But upon nothing else are thine eyes and thy heart than thine advantage, | and upon innocent blood—to shed it,—and upon oppression and upon greed—to practise it. || — Therefore thus saith Yahvé of Yoyaqîm son of Yosia king of Yuda : they shall not lament for him “ Oh my brother and oh sister ! ” | not lament for him “ Oh lord and oh majesty ! ” || the burial of an ass will he receive, | in that he is dragged and thrown far beyond the gates of Jerusalem ! ||

3. As Yéremyá intends now to bring forward the three previous kings, and to place in the same connexion in the next two strophes what he may before have spoken concerning them, he is unable to say much regarding the immediate successor of Yosia (who is here called Shallûm, but in the historical books is called by his regal name Yoachaz) because although this king was chosen by the people, and, it would seem, was much respected and beloved, he was after a short time carried away captive in his early youth by the Egyptians, 2 Kings xxiii. 30—33. Accord-

ingly, only a short prophetic lamentation, vv. 10-12, follows him, that he as one who will never return from the captivity is really more to be pitied than a man who has died, *e.g.*, his much lamented father, Yosia, Zech. xii. 11. *Comp. History of Israel*, IV. p. 251 (III. p. 775). The conjecture that the name Shallûm has been introduced from this passage, contrary to history, into the genealogy 1 Chron. iii. 15, is entirely baseless.

Much more can be said of his elder brother and successor, Yoyaqîm, who was in many respects very much like

## 4.

- 20 Ascend [Jerusalem] Lebanon and cry, and upon Bashan lift up thy voice, | and cry from 'Abarim—that all thy patrons are dashed in pieces! || I spoke unto thee in thy godlessness: but thou saidst "I will not hear!" | this hath been thy way from

his ancestor Ahaz (*History of Israel*, IV. 168 (III. 662 sq.)), who must have shown, during the eleven years of his reign, much cruelty and injustice in order to gratify his passions, especially a vain love of fame, delight in building and covetousness, and whose reign thereby formed such a mournful contrast to that of his excellent father that the censure of the prophet is compelled to make reference to it at the end, vv. 13-16: does he who from mere love of fame tortures men with severe forced labour (*corvees*), whose ambition culminates in the possession of a new, heaven-scaling, gorgeously decorated palace, think to maintain his rule if he can rival the well known Achaz in such things—wholly unlike his father who was prosperous by means of his righteousness, not recognizing the primary truths concerning the proper attitude towards Yahvé? Only destruction can follow such worship of self: a king of this kind will not die generally lamented, as *e.g.*, Yosia did, ver. 10, so that his relatives, following next to the corpse, raise their customary loud lamentation (Oh brother, or Oh sister), and then the mass of subjects raise their wail, Oh lord, oh his (the dead man's) majesty! (xxxiv. 5; 1 Kings xiii. 30), but dragged away by enemies (xv. 3) far from Jerusalem, will be flung forth when dead miserably like an ass, and

left without burial! vv. 17-19. Since here and xxxvi. 30, at a time when he was already dead and the truth of the prophecy accordingly seemed to be confirmed, this is repeated as it had once been foretold concerning him, the account of his end, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, is nevertheless probably more accurate than that 2 Kings xxiv. 6: he appears to have found a dishonourable death in the struggle against the Chaldeans without having been strictly taken captive to Babylon. Vers. 13, as well as Hab. ii. 12, follows Mic. iii. 10. קרע ver. 14, like iv. 30, in the following verse משה answers to it; on הלוי see § 177 *a*; instead of ספון it is better to read the *inf. abs.* ספון acc. § 351 *c*, for the reason that it corresponds to the following משוה in the structure of the sentence. Instead of בָּאֲרָז, ver. 15, which appears to have got into this verse from the same word ver. 14, the LXX still read בָּאֲחָז; others read בָּאֲחָב as if Ahab had been here spoken of, and they at least could not fall into the same error as the LXX of connecting the following אֲבִיקָה with it. If the common reading were correct, the words, *wilt thou rule because thou rivallest the cedar?* must mean, that he desired by his high edifices to grow like a cedar into the heavens. But this figure would not be clear and would be left too much detached.

4. The discourse now comes to the last of the three kings before Ssedeqia, Konyáhu or Yoyakhin, as he is called in the historical books, who was led

away captive into Babylon while very young after a short reign and lamented by many, as plainly appears. This being the fate of this king also, it is



thy youth that thou didst not hear my voice; || all thy shepherds the wind will shepherd, and thy patrons will go into captivity! | indeed then thou wilt be ashamed and blush at all thy wickedness! ||—Thou that dwellest upon Lebanon, that hast thy nest in cedars: | why sighest thou when pangs come upon thee, spasms as of child-birth? || As I live (saith Yahvé), although Konyáhu son of Yoyakim king of Yuda were a signet  
 25 upon my right hand,— | verily thence will I pluck thee, || and give thee into the hand of thy mortal foes, and into the hand of them before whom thou hast horror, | and into the hand of Nabukodrossor king of Babel and into the hand of the Chaldeans! || and I hurl thee and thy mother that bore thee upon the other land where ye were not born, | and there will ye die! || But upon the land whither to return they raise their desire, | —thither will they not return. || —“Is then this man Konyáhu a despicable brittle manufacture, or a vessel wherein is no pleasure? | wherefore were they hurled forth he and his seed, and thrown upon the land which they knew not?” || earth  
 30 earth earth! | hear Yahvé’s word: || thus saith Yahve: write ye this man as childless, as a hero who hath not prospered in his days: | for from his seed will no one prosper, sitting upon David’s throne and still ruling over Yuda. ||

fully shown that all these last kings and rulers of Israel meet with an unhappy end, and accordingly the discourse at this point becomes from the very first exceedingly agitated, and calls upon the unfortunate Ssion to ascend all the loftiest peaks of the holy land, Lebanon, Bashan and ‘Abarim, Deut. xxxii. 49, there to see and loudly to lament that all its *patrons*, i.e., its rulers and kings (ver. 22; Lam. i. 19; Zech. xiii. 6) now lie pitably upon the ground, like shattered cedars of these high mountains (Zech. xi. 1-9), ver. 20: but it cannot possibly be otherwise, adds the voice of reflexion; since all admonitions have been in vain, the wind must now lead away these shepherds and rulers, drive them into exile, become therefore, reversing the order of things, as it were their shepherd and

powerful conductor (acc. Hos. iv. 16), in order that the flock may find a better mind, vv. 20-22.—She, the proud city that thinks herself, acc. xxi. 13, 14, comp. xxii. 6, 7, as high as Lebanon, and imagines that she has her unsailable nest among heaven-scaling cedars, wherefore does she, now the unavoidable calamity is about to come, when the pangs of birth approach, sigh so violently over the thing which she herself brought to pass? ver. 23 (נִחְנָתָהּ, LXX. καταστροφάτης, must according to the context and § 197 b note, stand for נִיחָנָתָהּ) after Mic. iv. 9 sq. The young king Konyáhu at least, although he were as precious to him as a signet ring upon his right hand (Cant. viii. 6), must be plucked off by Yahvé, and together with his queen-mother (comp. *ante* p. 143) be hurled into terrible exile, both of

## 5.

xxiii.

I Oh shepherds that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture ! (saith Yahvé). || Therefore thus saith Yahvé Israel's God concerning the shepherds that feed my people : *ye* have scattered my sheep and driven them away, have not visited them : | behold I visit upon you the evil of your deeds (saith Yahvé) ! || —But I will gather the remnant of my sheep from all the lands whither I have driven them, | and bring them back into their pastures, that they may be fruitful and multiply, || and set over them shepherds that feed them, | that  
 5 they no more fear nor be dismayed\* (saith Yahvé). || Behold days come (saith Yahvé)—and I set up for David a righteous shoot, | he reigneth then as king and hath skill, doeth justice and righteousness in the earth ; || in his days will Yuda be saved, and Israel dwell safely, | and this is his name whereby

them never again to return to the country whither they direct their strongest desire, vv. 23-27. Although many sympathetic hearts in the land may bitterly complain over this hard lot of their beloved young king, who was carried off together with his young children (whilst his uncle Ssedeqia, from whom and whose house nothing good was expected, came to the throne), Yéremyá is nevertheless unable to reiterate loudly enough that it is nothing less than an unalterable divine

resolve, that neither he nor one of his sons shall ascend the throne of David, that, on the contrary, these sons shall soon perish, and thus the father experience, in addition to all his other misfortunes, the destruction of his own line, vv. 28-30. The article in **הַאָרֶץ**, ver. 26, might seem wrong, since it is not found before the closely connected **אֶרֶץ**; but acc. § 293 a, this is not unusual, and the article is confirmed by ver. 28 : it is precisely the well-known terrible land that is intended !

5. For, briefly, to conclude all this, the punishment of all the surviving descendants of the Davidic stem without exception is unalterably determined by Yahvé, because they have managed their pastoral calling so badly and have suffered their sheep to perish, xxiii. 1, 2. But the ancient and eternally true Messianic promises shall not thereby suffer : the remnant of the lost flock will some day be gathered from the

dispersion and become prosperous under fitter shepherds, vv. 3, 4, yea, the Messiah himself, the *righteous shoot* of David, will come, in order that under him the renewed and reformed nation may bear the new name *Yahvé is our righteousness*, we know that in Yahvé alone do we become righteous, vv. 5, 6, comp. xxxiii. 15, 16. A second and more glorious redemption of Israel will then be celebrated, vv. 7, 8, as is here

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\* *Nor be lacking.*

they will call themselves “Yahvé is our righteousness.” || Therefore behold days come (saith Yahvé) | —and it will no more be said “As Yahvé liveth that led up Israel’s sons from Egypt,” || but “as Yahvé liveth that led up and brought the seed of the house of Israel | from the northern country and from all the countries whither I had driven them,” and they then dwell upon their own soil. ||

repeated from xvi. 15, 16. The words ולא יפקדו, ver. 4, comp. iii. 16, do not very well fit into the context and structure of the verse, nor are they in the LXX; presumably ולא יפקדו should be read, although this word is rarely used by Yere-myā. It is impossible to suppose that the new name, ver. 6, is intended to belong to the Messiah: the name itself points by its structure to the nation and country, and the syntax is if possible still plainer xxxiii. 16;

but יקראו must be read, acc. § 249 b, instead of יקראי.

Even in the case of this piece, which is already so complete in itself, Yéremyā seeks to give the prophetic word at the end a favourable turn, as we have observed this as so significant in the arrangement of most of the foregoing pieces, pp. 151, 179. In the LXX is an unfortunate misplacement of vv. 6, 7 after ver. 40.

## II.—Concerning the Prophets.

### Ch. XXIII. 9-40.

#### Of the Prophets.

This brief heading is similar to those of the following main sections, xlvi. 2; xlviii. 1; xlix. 1, 7, 23, 28; and as the previous piece was so complete in itself the heading is the more appropriate here. The priests are nowhere mentioned in it except incidentally.

#### 1.

My inmost heart is broken, and all my bones are soft, | I am become like a drunken man, like a man whom wine hath over-  
10 come | —before Yahvé and before his holy words. || For “of adulterers is the land full, | yea at the curse the land withereth, the pastures of the common dry up; | and their greed became wicked, their bravery false: || for both Prophet and priest are profane, | also in my house I found their wickedness”: saith Yahvé. || —Therefore their way will be unto them

- like slippery things, into darkness will they be driven and fall therein: | for I bring upon them evil, the year of their punishment! saith Yahvé. || Also among the Prophets of Samaria I saw offence; | they prophesied by Báal and led my people Israel astray; || but among the prophets of Jerusalem I saw a horrible thing: | committing adultery and walking in lies, | and they strengthen the hands of the evildoers without that they depart every one from his wickedness! | they become unto me all like
- 15 Sodóm and their inhabitants like Ghamorraah. || Therefore thus saith Yahvé of Hosts concerning the Prophets: behold I feed them with wormwood, and make them drink poison-water, | — because from the Prophets of Jerusalem hath gone forth profanity into the whole land! ||

## 2.

Thus saith Yahve of Hosts: Harken not unto the words of the Prophets that prophesy to you: they deceive you, | the vision of their own heart they speak, not from the mouth of

1. At once, in the first strophe, the divine indignation which agitates the inmost heart of this righteous prophet at the thought of the multitudes of totally degenerate prophets, disburdens itself. Yéremyá is terribly moved at the violently threatening words which Yahvé is compelled to utter, ver. 9 (comp. vi. 11 and iv. 26), because all evil desires being let loose are rampant upon the suffering earth which appears already to be smitten by the divine curse (comp. the later descriptions "Isa." xxiv. 4-6; Zech. v. 1-4), and are rampant even amongst the prophets and priests that have become profane and in the temple itself, vv. 10, 11, comp. xxix. 23: therefore the end of these prophets will be most calamitous, they being unable to stand the trial, ver. 12a, like Ps. xxxv. 6 and Isa. viii. 22, b like vi. 15; xi. 23; xlviii. 44. Since the

passage of Isa. was clearly in the mind of the prophet, the word באפלה must be placed, contrary to the accents, in the second-verse member, which improves the structure of the verse, whilst such a close conjunction of *slipperiness* and *darkness* as is found Ps. xxxv. 6 is not necessary.—The prophets of the Northern kingdom no doubt also transgressed in former times, but their sins were small compared with the horrible transgressions of the incorrigible prophets of Jerusalem, who sin grievously themselves, and assist the wickedness of others by their flattery and hypocrisy, so that from this consideration the most painful punishment must inevitably fall upon them, vv. 13-15; ver. 15a exactly like viii. 14; ix. 14. On שבו, ver. 14, which stands for יִשְׁבּוּ, comp. § 337 b note.

2. But the unfortunate people who allow themselves to be misled by these miserable prophets, Yéremyá must pub-

licly exhort not to believe those who speak according to the suggestions of their own confused minds and perverse



20 Yahvé; || they say constantly unto my despisers “Yahvé speaketh: prosperity will be unto you!” | and if one walketh in the stubbornness of his heart, they say “no evil will come upon you!” || Yea who stood then in Yahvé’s secret, that he should see and hear his word? | who hath marked my word and heard? || “behold a storming of Yahvé’s, a wrath breaketh out, | and a storm whirleth up to whirl itself upon the head of the wicked: || Yahvé’s wrath will not abate until he executeth and until he establisheth the thoughts of his heart: | at the end of the days will ye get insight into it!” ||—I have not sent the Prophets—yet they ran, | have not spoken unto them—yet they prophesied: || but if they stand in my secret, | let them proclaim my words to my people, and bring them from their evil way and from the wickedness of their deeds! || Am I then a God near at hand (saith Yahvé), | and not a God afar off? || or hideth any one himself in hiding-places that I see him not (saith Yahvé)? | do I not fill the heaven and the earth (saith Yahvé)? ||

hearts (comp. Num. xvi. 28; Prov. xviii. 2), and who promise, in the immediate future, preposterously perverting everything, prosperity in the name of Yahvé precisely to the worst men, vv. 16, 17, comp. iv. 10; vi. 14; viii. 11, and on the other hand, xii. 12; whilst he who will claim to be really Yahvé’s confidant, must before everything *see, i.e.* feel most vividly, as shown to him by God, and thus *hear* also from him, the grand, serious truth, that in the immediate future a desolating, terrible storm, precisely nothing but calamity will go forth from Yahvé in his wrath, the overwhelming violence of which they also will finally painfully feel who at present will hear nothing of it, vv. 18-20. The weighty words, vv. 19, 20, which are repeated subsequently, xxx. 23, 24, stood manifestly in one of the

earliest writings of Yéremyá, and are here quoted as known from that work, and their truth already confirmed by the event.—Accordingly, nothing further can be said of these prophets than that their whole profession and teaching are without any true divine basis; if they are really, as they profess, in the secret of Yahvé (comp. Amos iii. 7), let them speak in quite another tone to the people, and not shun the difficulty of opposing the prevalence of evil in the actual world of to-day, vv. 21, 22; from Him who is everywhere present in his power and his knowledge, these weak-minded prophets vainly hope to escape, he will punish them wherever they may be, and in whatever land they may flee into, on the day of judgment! vv. 23, 24, after Amos ix. 2-4.

### 3.

25 I have heard what the Prophets that prophesy in my name allege saying | “I dreamed I dreamed!” || How long say ye lieth

it in the heart of the Prophets to prophesy lies | and be Prophets of the deceit of their own hearts? || they who meditate to make my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell one to the other, | as their fathers forgot my name through Báal. || The Prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully: | what hath the straw in common with the corn? (saith Yahvé). || Is not my word thus—like fire (saith Yahvé), | and  
 30 like a hammer that breaketh rocks? || —Therefore I come upon the Prophets (saith Yahvé), | that steal my words one from the other— || I come upon the Prophets (saith Yahvé), | that take their tongue and say “thus saith —” || I come upon them that prophesy lying dreams (saith Yahvé), and tell them and mislead my people by their lying words and by their boasting, | although I have not sent them nor appointed them, and they bring no profit at all to this people (saith Yahvé). ||

3. It is true the false prophets of Yahvé like to appeal to dreams, in which they say Yahvé reveals himself to them, indeed, they have no other pretext of the same telling effect as such dreams, which they perpetually urge, as Yahvé well knows, ver. 25; but, it must here be immediately asked, how long will they, then, continue their lies, those dangerous dreams and imaginations of their own confused minds whereby they desire to turn away the nation from the true knowledge of Yahvé? vv. 26, 27. Mere dreams, imaginations, which people think or profess to have received from Yahvé, are after all very far removed from the true word of Yahvé, which dwells in the inmost life of a prophet; let both be for once compared, let an experiment be made with both, and it will be found that the feeble, dark imagination, or

dream, which is often mixed with deceit, holds the relation of straw to corn in comparison with the genuine revelation that like fire penetrates everything in a moment, or like a hammer breaks the rocks, vv. 28, 29. Therefore these uncalled prophets, who do not utter living, original oracles, derived from a pure and fresh inward strength, but only such as are borrowed and feeble, who (instead of speaking from the promptings of the spirit and its inmost life) merely take their tongues as an instrument close at hand and therewith imitate sacred prophetic *formulae* and mislead the people by means of such empty ostentation—these prophets can only fear punishment from Yahvé, as is declared with great agitation, vv. 30-32. Comp. Vol. I. pp. 18 sq., 54. The construction in ver. 26 acc. § 298 b.

## 4.

And when this people or the Prophet or a priest asketh thee, saying “What is Yahvé’s high-oracle?” | then say unto

them: what is high-oracle?—that I thrust you forth!\* (saith Yahvé); || and the Prophet and the priest and the people that saith “high-oracle of Yahvé” | —I visit upon that man and  
 35 upon his house! || —Thus shall ye say one to the other and amongst each other | “what did Yahvé answer and what said Yahvé?” || but a high-oracle of Yahvé shall ye not mention any more, (but high-oracle shall be to every one his own word) nor pervert the words of the living God of Yahvé of Hosts our God! || thus shalt thou say to the Prophet | “what did Yahvé answer thee, and what said Yahvé?” || —But if ye say “high-oracle of Yahvé,” therefore thus saith Yahvé: because ye say this word “high-oracle of Yahvé” | and I sent to you saying “Ye shall not say *high-oracle* of Yahvé!” || there-  
 40 fore come I and *lift* you up *high high* | and thrust you and the city which I gave to you and your fathers far away from my face, || and I put upon you an eternal scorn, | and eternal shame never to be forgotten!

4. And in similar agitation (which is apparent in the unusually frequent repetition of the phrase “saith Yahvé”) the prophet finally speaks against a prophetic term which both the people and the ordinary prophets were then in the habit of grievously abusing, namely, the term *מִשְׁאֵל יְהוָה*, *high-oracle of Yahvé*, comp. Vol. I. p. 79-81. This somewhat grandly sounding name, which was new in the eighth century, and denoted a somewhat more artistic prophetic, or semi-prophetic (Prov. xxx. 1; xxxi. 1), composition, had at that time evidently become very common and subject to great abuse from incapable prophets and writers: nevertheless this kind of piece was still very popular, and everybody desired to know what Yahvé's *high-oracle* was. To the serious Yéremyá, who justly saw therein only a sign of the general decline of all

prophecy, this is so repugnant that he at once at the opening of the strophe declares with a severe paronomasia, that to such a question as what the *high-oracle* said,† the fitting divine answer was, that Yahvé will *thrust them forth*, laying hold of them with his mighty hand will drive them into exile, that no abuse of this word can go unpunished, vv. 33, 34, comp. ver. 39. Instead of such a question, they ought rather to enquire for the clear divine word (let everyone understand by the high-sounding word *high-oracle* the suggestion of his own imagination), in order that the genuine words of Yahvé, the truly prophetic utterances, may not be perverted and misunderstood, vv. 35-37. Should the abuse of that word and thereby the disregard of the simple and true revelation, or of genuine prophecy, continue after this very definite

\* The German is here untranslatable. The author endeavours to represent the underlying paronomasia between the Hebrew words *הִשְׁאֵל* *hochspruch* and *נִמְשָׁל* by rendering the verb “dass ich *hoch* euch *fortstosse*.” We might perhaps venture the adaptation: “I highly abominate you.”—Tr.

† Germ. *Wie der hochspruch laute*.—Tr.

prophetic warning, that punishment threatened above, ver. 33, will necessarily follow, as is now, vv. 38-40, further described with a more exact indication of the paronomasia; ver. 40, like xx. 11. As the signification of the paronomasia is thus plainly indicated, נְשִׂיתִי = נְשִׂאתִי and נֶשֶׂא must be read instead of נְשִׂיתִי and נֶשֶׂא, the reading of the LXX and also of a few Hebrew MSS. and editions; comp. Isa.

xxii. 17; Job xxx. 22; it follows from § 198 b that a root נֶשֶׂא (although in the case of this root it is rare) may change into נָשָׂה; probably the word should then be pointed as Piel וְנִשְׂתִּיתִי. The אֵת before מֶשֶׂא, ver. 33, is the sign of the accusative: as regards this question, *what is high-oracle?* The proper meaning of the word before Yahvé is *that*, etc. Ez. xvii. 21; xlv. 3, comp. § 277 d.

### III.—The accompanying Vision.

#### Ch. xxiv.

#### XXIV.

- 1 Yahvé showed me a symbol and behold two baskets of figs, placed before the Temple of Yahvé, | after that Nabukodrossor king of Babel had led away Konyáhu son of Yoyaqîm king of Yuda and the princes of Yuda with the artificers and fortress-workmen from Jerusalem and brought them unto Babel; || the one basket very good figs like the early figs, | and the other basket very bad figs which for badness were not eatable. || And Yahvé said unto me, "what seest thou Yéremyá?" I said: figs; | the good figs are very good, and the bad very bad for badness not eatable. || —Then came Yahvé's word unto me
- 5 thus: || thus saith Yahvé Israel's God: Like these good figs | thus will I regard the captives of Yuda whom I dismissed from this place into the land of the Chaldeans for good! || for I set mine eye upon them for good and lead them back unto this land, | build them then without pulling down, and plant them without plucking up, || and give to them a heart to know me that I am Yahvé, that they become to me a people and I become to them a God, | when they turn to me with their whole heart. || —But like the bad figs which for badness are not eatable | surely thus saith Yahvé—so will I make Ssedeqia the king of Yuda and his princes and the remnant of Jerusalem both they that remain in this land and they that dwell in the land of Egypt, || I make them a playball for all the kingdoms of the earth, | a scorn and a proverb a taunt and a curse
- 10 in all the places whither I thrust them, || and I send upon them the sword the famine and the pestilence, | until they



have disappeared from the land which I gave to them and their fathers. ||

This vision is formed upon the model of Amos viii. 1-3. Baskets of fruit are probably brought to the temple, as first-fruits, as tenths; in the case of no other kind of fruit is there such a difference in point of quality as in figs. When therefore the prophet, a short time after the exile of Yoyakhîn, in spirit beheld before the temple two baskets of fruit which were so very different though they belonged to the same species, that readily became to him a striking image of the real condition of the kingdom at that time: on the one hand, the young promising king led captive to Babylon with all the best and most useful people of the land—upon them was founded the hope of the future, that hope which is further explained, xxiii. 3-8, this was the basket of beautiful sound figs; on the other hand, the weak king Ssedeqia remaining in the land with the pitiable, corrupted remnant of the nation, unreformed and incorrigible (as the prophet constantly found as he dwelt amongst them), constantly meeting with fresh disturbances and drawing near to the complete overthrow of the kingdom, in fact, bringing it about—upon these was based the dark foreboding of the future, they were the basket of bad figs which Yahvé cannot accept; at which point the discourse recurs to its

commencement, ch. xxi. Those who had fled into Egypt are reckoned with those that still dwell in Jerusalem, ver. 8, inasmuch as they are animated by the same hatred towards the Chaldeans.—It is evident from the context of the passages in which it occurs, xxix. 2; 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 16, that the obscure word *הַפִּסְיָר*, ver. 1, which is found only in this same historical connexion, cannot signify anything like locksmiths, or door-keepers, as the Targum takes it, nor public servants, according to the Peschito, nor *τοὺς δεσμώτας*, LXX; comp. *History of Israel* IV. 263 (III. 792). The LXX add further the *richest of the land*, certainly without good reason. The condition expressed by *פִּי*, ver. 7, occurs again xxix. 13.

It is remarkable that the praise of those who had been led captive by the Chaldeans soon produced its effect upon them: comp. the remarks upon this point in the comments on the book of Hezeqiel. The word *לרעה* for *harm*, ver. 9, which appears to be only a corruption of the foregoing *ליועה*, is correctly omitted by the LXX; for the rest the verse follows Deut. xxviii. 37. How bad figs might be presented as offerings, appears from *Alterthümer*, pp. 43, 399 (35, 346).

### III.—THE FOREIGN NATIONS AND ISRAEL.

#### Ch. XLVI.—XLIX; XXV.

The general character of prophecies concerning foreign nations naturally requires that they should have a special place assigned to them in the larger work. Yéremyá, moreover,

connects a threatening oracle against Israel with those against foreign nations, and thus takes, from a higher standpoint, a comprehensive view of all nations without exception, just as Ssephanya had done previously.

The first occasion for so doing was presented, acc. xlv. 1; xxv. 1, by the decisive fourth year of the reign of Yoyaqîm, when the Egyptian supremacy was destroyed and the prophetic eye foresaw with the rise of the Chaldean power a period of fresh and severe subjugation about to come, not only over Israel but also over all surrounding nations far and near, indeed, the commencement of long and devastating wars for the whole world. It seemed at that time as if the Lord of the earth presented by means of the Chaldeans as his instruments the intoxicating wine of infatuation and of destruction to both Israel and the foreign nations, or as if, after such numerous perversities and crimes which they had suffered to grow up in their midst, all nations were at last ripe as in a harvest to be cut down and destroyed; and the prophet was thus able to bring forward in a long line the foreign nations, each different from the rest in its peculiar circumstances, but all of them alike as exposed in the immediate future to the bursting storm of the righteous, divine anger, and even to place Israel in this mournful respect on a level with them. In the first edition of the book of Yéremyá, as it was first written in that eventful year, there were evidently (as in the book of Hezeqiel) just seven oracles composed concerning foreign nations of this kind: it was not until the subsequent edition that that concerning the 'Aelamites, xlix. 34-39 (as the heading itself indicates) was added.

The prophet's utterance in this respect concerning Israel, could, however, inasmuch as the nation's numerous faults and the reasons for the divine punishment had long before been described at length, be most easily made in a comprehensive but brief recapitulating supplement, together with the symbolical elucidation of it, which as usual comes at the end.

According to all appearances, the pieces concerning the foreign nations originally stood first.

1. *The foreign nations.*

(Ch. XLVI.-XLIX. (with the exception of XLVI. 13-28).

xlvi. That which came as the word of Yahvé unto the prophet Yéremyá concerning the nations.

It was scarcely possible to write a separate oracle concerning each of the numerous small nations: they are referred to summarily in ch. xxv. Accordingly, only a series of seven, the customary round number, are here selected, upon each of which a distinct discourse is to be written. These seven, again, are so arranged, in an order which was just at that time natural, that Egypt, which most stood forth amidst the revolutions of the time to oppose the Chaldeans, is first introduced, and next, the direction from the south-west to the north-east being taken, the Philistines and incidentally the Phœnicians, after that, beyond the Dead Sea, the three small kingdoms, always found associated, Môab, Ammôn, and Edom, in their ancient order of succession, are considered, and finally the more distant Syrian and Arabian petty kingdoms. It was not until a subsequent addition was made that an eighth people, 'Aelam, lying far to the east, was subjoined. It is quite evident that the arrangement of the seven pieces (which according to the prophet's order of themselves most naturally fall into the groups of 2 and 3 and 2) was intended by the prophet himself: one proof of this is the frequent unmistakable reference of a characteristic expression found in a subsequent piece to the piece immediately preceding it, having the appearance of an echo, or of an enlargement, of the expression to which it refers back, *e.g.*, פֶּחֶר, xlix. 5 to xlviii. 43; Chesbon xlix. 3 to xlviii. 45; the figure of the four winds, xlix. 36 to xlix. 32; comp. also xlv. 7 with xlvii. 2; xlix. 1 with xlix. 7.—It may be seen

from this how arbitrary is the transposition by the LXX of all the pieces placed together, xlv. li., comp. *ante* p. 90. These translators followed no clear principle at all in the matter: they seem to have concluded that the long piece concerning Babylon, l., li., was to be placed as early as possible; the small piece preceding it, concerning the 'Aelamites, xlix. 24-39, was then placed at the commencement of these oracles, probably because, as the Persian rule had then been established, it was thought desirable to give prominence to what might easily be supposed to refer to Persia; the piece concerning Babylon was thus made immediately to follow those concerning Egypt, next the piece concerning the Philistines was left in its place, but had subjoined to it as a longer piece that concerning Edóm, then the three short pieces concerning 'Ammon, Kedar and Damascus were placed together, and finally the long piece concerning Môab, in this dislocated order, was made to complete the series.

The length of the original seven pieces is various, inasmuch as Môab and Edóm are dealt with at greatest length, they being the nations that had from time immemorial been most nearly connected with the Hebrews, had come into the closest contact with them, and had already been often addressed by earlier prophets in extensive oracles, and had at that very time, under the protection of the Chaldeans, manifested a peculiarly ungenerous hostility towards Israel. In the case of these nations Yéremyá reproduces to a great extent older oracles, whilst in the shorter pieces he is more original.

All these seven nations are alike in this, that the same divine inquisition and punishment awaits them all alike: and as the prophet conceives of no one else as the instrument of this punishment than the hero Nabukodrossor, as he at that time in his fresh vigour marched through the countries, terrible to all and everywhere victorious (acc. xlviii. 40; xlix. 19, 23), it is clear that he could not have placed the Chaldeans themselves in the same category. Now, when the threat against a nation



is descending in its full force, it appears as if that nation must be for ever ruined and swept away utterly, without any probability of amendment. Yet this is only appearance, for in other passages these Heathen also are pointed to the pity of the true God, xlix. 11, and as if from a higher world there is often heard in a few words at the end of the most terrible threats the joyous assurance, that through Yahvé in the distant future there awaits this people (although it is heathen) a change for the better and happy restoration, an assurance which is found at the end of the pieces concerning Môab xlviii. 47, 'Ammôn xlix. 6, and 'Aelam xlix. 39, and might evidently stand quite as well at the end of all the rest (comp. subsequently the case of the Egyptians, xlvi. 26), and, which is very remarkable, exactly the same as that in which its redemption and final prosperity is proclaimed to Israel itself, xxx. 3; xxxii. 44; xxxiii. 26, and elsewhere; comp. the passage above, xii. 15-17. It is accordingly the true view of the prophet, that all heathen nations shall by the storms which must necessarily come in the immediate future only be violently snatched from their present perverse and irremediable condition, that in a distant future, the time of which is to be further defined, ch. xxv., they may be saved and prosperous with Israel.

I.—*Egypt*.

## Ch. XLVI. 2-12.

xlvi.

2 Of Egypt, on account of the army of Pharaoh Nekho the Egyptian king which was by the Euphrates in Karkemish, which Nabukodrossor the Babylonian king smote in the fourth year of Yoyaqim son of Yosia the king of Yuda.

Comp. on this event the record, which is only too short, 2 Kings xxiv. 7. Our piece distinctly presupposes the battle on the Euphrates as past, vv. 6, 10, and must accordingly have

been written subsequently. As we now find it in our book, it is mainly the contrast between the well prepared and proud advance of the Egyptians towards the Euphrates and their disgraceful defeat, which is so brought forward as to make it appear as the righteous punishment from Yahvé. In the very first of the three short strophes the strange contrast receives prominence, vv. 3-6, and is then explained more particularly in the two following strophes with reference to its two aspects, vv. 7-9, 10-12.

## 1.

- “Get ready shield and shelter, and onwards to the war! || harness the horses and mount the chargers and take your stand in helmets, | furbish the lances, put on the armour” || —
- 5 Wherefore saw I them dismayed, turn backwards, and their heroes dashed in pieces? | did they do nothing but flee and turned not again? | —Terror is round about! (saith Yahvé); || let not the swift flee, and let not the hero save himself: | on the north by the Euphrates they stumbled and fell! ||

## 2.

“Who is this that swelleth like the Nile, whose waters roll themselves like the rivers?” ||—Egypt swelleth like the Nile, and like the rivers the waters wildly roll themselves, | that it said “I will ascend cover the earth, destroy city and

1. There is heard a vast preparation for war, soldiers bearing all kinds of arms are advancing, vv. 3, 4, comp. ver. 9. But suddenly these very soldiers, notwithstanding their perfect equipment, are seen to be hopelessly and resistlessly fleeing: how is that? Yahvé gives the explanation: round about is terror (xx. 3), on all sides danger, as must be the case when Yahvé holds a great day of judgment

and punishment, comp. ver. 10; therefore let not him who is given over to destruction attempt to flee, whatever they do they cannot reach Egypt again alive, but must fall by the Euphrates! vv. 5, 6, ver. 6 after Amos ii. 14, 15. The pron. הַיִּפְתָּה, ver. 5, which ought strictly speaking to be in the accusative, is loosely subordinated to the verb רָאִיתִי, acc. § 284 b, (see below on Ez. iii. 20).

2. Once more surprise at the first phenomenon recurs, and in a stronger form: a monstrous, devastating river appears to roll itself wildly along, over-

whelming all countries: who is it?—It is Egypt, which is now threatening to overrun the earth and to lay everything waste, vv. 7, 8, whose various

they who dwell therein!" || Mount the chargers and rush and roar ye chariots, the heroes march forth, | Kushites and Putites holding the shield, and Libyans holding bending the bow.

3.

- 10 But that day is from the Lord Yahvé of Hosts a day of vengeance to avenge himself on his enemies, | and the sword will devour and be satiated, and be refreshed with their blood: | for a sacrifice hath the Lord Yahvé of Hosts in the north-land by the Euphrates. || —Ascend unto Gilead and take balm, thou virgin daughter of Egypt! | in vain increasest thou the medicines, a remedy hast thou not! || Nations heard of thy shame, and of thy mockery is the earth full: | that they stumbled hero against hero, together they both of them fall! ||

nationalities are advancing fully equipped, ver. 9. The phrase הַרְחֵלֶיךָ הָרֶכֶב appears to be thus early a

quotation from Nah. ii. 5, just as ver. 10 contains an allusion to Nah. i. 2.—But

3. still more clearly recurs the true explanation of this wonderful phenomenon: the purpose for which this immense host rolls up from Africa is only that it may fall by the Euphrates as an example of a still greater day of judgment and punishment from Yahvé and as a victim of his righteous anger, for who does not know how greatly the Egyptians in ancient and recent times

have sinned against the true community arising in Israel? ver. 10. Egypt may take pains to obtain remedies after such fatal wounds (comp. viii, 22), but it is in vain! The nations of the earth have once for all recognized the fact, that the ranks of the Egyptian heroes cannot stand before the determinations of higher destiny, vv. 11, 12.

II.—*The Philistines.*

xlvi.

CH. XLVII.

- 1 That which came as the word of Yahvé unto the prophet Yéremyá concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh conquered Ghazza.

It is evident from this historical note that the piece before us is expressly intended to be taken, in contrast with the preceding piece, as spoken before the fulfilment of its threat of a great destruction of the Philistines. And, as a fact, the piece, with its two short strophes, does not threaten an attack by

Pharao, as might be expected from the heading, but an attack from the north which shall overcome the Philistines, these war-like auxiliaries of the Phœnicians, and thereby seriously injure the Phœnicians themselves. Now, as we have at present no reason to suppose that the name Pharao in the heading is an error for Nebukodrossor, the conflicts of the Chaldeans and Egyptians for the possession of the border fortresses, *e.g.*, Ghazza, must have been protracted and full of vicissitude, so that the Egyptians also at some time succeeded in taking Ghazza temporarily, and in accordance therewith the date of this oracle could subsequently be determined. Although we have no historical information whatever with regard to this event, so much is still clear from 2 Kings xxiv. 7, that these struggles lasted for a long time during the reign of Yoyaqîm; in this piece itself also the entire second strophe points to protracted and violent struggles between the military powers of that time. In any case, we have the less reason to suppose that we have here a reference to the much later attacks of the Egyptians upon the Phœnicians and Cyprians mentioned Herod ii. 161; Diod. i. 18, inasmuch as the Chaldeans only are expressly referred to as powerful aggressors. Comp. further *History of Israel*, IV. 257 (III. 783 sq.).

## I.

Thus saith Yahvé: behold waters rise from the north, and become an overflowing stream, | so that they overflow land and its fulness, city and its inhabitants, | and the men lament aloud, all inhabitants of the land wail. || Because of the loud tramp of the hoofs of his chargers, because of the roar of his chariots, of the noise of his wheels | fathers look not unto sons, for feebleness of hands— || on account of the day that cometh to lay waste all Philistines, to cut off from the Tyrians and Sidonians every remainder of helpers: | for Yahvé will lay waste the Philistines, the remnant of the coast of Kaphtor.

- |                                                                           |                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. The Chaldean is threatening from the north like an overflowing and de- | structive stream, ver. 2, after Isa. viii. 7. Already the alarm of war is heard |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



2.

“Already baldness is come unto Ghazza; ‘Ashqalôn is destroyed, the remnant of their plain; | —how long wilt thou wound thyself? || O sword of Yahvé, how long wilt thou not rest? | gather thyself into thy sheath, draw back and be quiet!”—How should it rest when Yahvé hath commissioned it against ‘Ashqalôn, | and against the sea shore—thither hath appointed it? ||

rolling up, so terrifying men that from alarm (from feebleness of their hands, comp. vi. 24) they forget the most natural feelings of humanity, because they foresee only too certainly the approach of the great day of calamity which will annihilate the last remnant of their helpers, which the Phœnicians

continue to possess in their allies the Philistines, vv. 3. 4. Kaphtor, after Amos ix. 7, must in this passage really mean the same as *Philistia*, since שַׁרְיִית must without doubt be understood in the same sense as ver. 5; שָׁרִיד, ver. 4, must be the *st. const.*

2. It is true the evil has already long raged over the cities of Philistia (they have come to be but a *remnant*, Psammetichus, *e.g.*, having so furiously ravaged Ashdôd, xxv. 20; Herod. ii. 157), they sit there as if already destroyed in deep mourning, according to the figure Isa. iii. 26 b, like a widowed and bereaved woman that pulls out her hair and in terrible despair and tears wounds in her hands (comp. xvi. 6, xlviii. 37): and how long shall that go on? how long shall it be before the great sword of vengeance (after Zech.

xiii. 7) finds rest? vv. 6, 7. Thus men might justly ask, and thus the prophet complains as a man. But a moment of higher reflection and of divine outlook suffices to silence all doubts: since manifestly Yahvé now wields the sword against those cities of the coast, it cannot and it may not rest! ver. 7. In this verse תִּשְׁקֵי is evidently not intended to be the second person, but is probably, after the Aramaic form, the fem. of the third person תִּשְׁקֵי, unless it is simply an incorrect repetition from ver. 6.

III.—*Moab.*

Ch. XLVIII.

xlvi.

1 Of Mòab.

Yéremyā was the more able to make the discourse concerning Moab the longest, inasmuch as the older prophets had already very often spoken with regard to this people, which at that time had long been considerably powerful and prosperous;

and the more earnestly and unweariedly the prophet's discourse is directed against it, the less this nation appears, notwithstanding its wilful apostasy from the higher religion, yea, even notwithstanding its mockery of that religion, to have been at that time in any danger from without, comp. especially ver. 10. Further, special motives, based on the most recent occurrences between Môab and Israel, which will be considered below, particularly in connexion with vv. 26, 27, must have induced the prophet to speak at such unusual length and so severely against this people, and to exhaust whatever language and whatever arguments might from a higher standpoint avail against it. Thus, in the first strophe, the discourse brings out the false confidence of the nation in its external resources; in the second, its indifference, which had grown up through a long period of external prosperity, to higher things; in the third, its proud strength; in the fourth and fifth, its haughty thoughts towards Yahvé, until in the sixth the conclusion is rapidly drawn that there is no salvation any more possible. It is very instructive to observe how Yéremyá scarcely does more than shape the beginning and the end of each strophe after his own manner, while he freely works up older oracles into the body of the strophes: at all events, we are compelled to conclude this from the passages of the Old Testament certainly of an older date which here served him as models. Yéremyá himself intimates this in the last words of ver. 8.

## 1.

Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: Alas for Nebó that it is laid waste! | ashamed taken captive is Qiryatháim, ashamed is Misgab and dismayed! || There is no more a laud-hymn of Moab: | in Chesbon [Plathouse] they plot evil against it "come and let us cut it off as a nation!" | thou Madmen [Stillhouse] also shalt become still, after thee will come the sword. || —Hark a cry from Choronáim "desolation and great ruin!" | "laid in ruins is Môab!" men cry aloud  
 5 towards Ssó'ar; || for the ascent of Luchith — amid weeping it

ascendeth it, weeping, | for on the descent of Choronáim is heard the cry of destruction. || —Flee save your souls, | that they become like steppe-shrubs in the desert! || For because thou [Môab!] trustedst in thy fortresses and stores, thou also wilt be taken, | and Kamósh go forth into exile, his priests and princes together; || that the destroyer may come upon every city, and no city escape, | and the valley perish and the plain lie waste, as Yahvé hath saith. ||

## 2.

Give wings unto Môab, because flying it will flee, | and its cities become a waste, without any inhabitant therein! ||  
 10 (cursed is he that executeth falsely the commission of Yahvé, | that holdeth back his sword from blood!) || —Immovable was

1. How the whole of Môab is already in confusion and sorrow is shown vv. 1-5, with the use to some extent of paronomasiæ, by the enumeration of a number of different cities belonging to it. As early as ver. 2 we meet with what is apparently a quotation from an older oracle, when probably the conquest of the important city of Chesbon, which the Israelites at one time held, Num. xxi. 25, was promised to them together with the destruction of the fame of Môab. Vv. 3-5 are freely reproduced from Isa. xv. 5; but the division of vv. 3 and 4 in the present text is unfortunate, and it is better to read with the LXX *צַעֲרָה* = *צַעֲרָה* instead of the K'thib *צַעֲרָה*; *צָרִי* which the LXX omit, also destroys most plainly the possible meaning of the words and appears to be ungenune; on the other hand, *מוֹרָד*, or *בְּמוֹרָד*, is here quite suitable on account of the antithesis, and probably more original than *דָּרָה* as the LXX read.—The

conclusion of this strophe, vv. 6-8, is, on the contrary, quite in Yéremyá's own manner. Flee, ye souls, and if you should stand in the desert as lonely as its melancholy shrubs, xvii. 6: just because Môab trusts to its fortresses and the stores which are heaped up in them as to its true protection, it together with its idols and magnates must experience the devastation both of its cities (i.e., the strongholds, Mic. v. 11, 13) and of the open country! vv. 7, 8. Since this antithesis pervades the entire passage, it is better to read, in accordance with the rendering of the LXX *ἐν ὄχλῳ μὲν σοῦ*, some such word as *מַעֲוִיָּה* instead of *מַעֲשִׂיד*, in which case the following *וּבְאִזְרוֹתֶיהָ*, which the LXX omit, may without difficulty be considered genuine. Instead of *נַפְשֵׁכֶם*, the reading of the LXX *נַפְשֵׁיכֶם* must also be adopted, the following word being unintelligible without this plur., comp. § 177 c.

2. Certainly, Môab must flee as quickly as possible, wings (*צִיץ* comp. *נֹצֵץ*) should be given to it, to fly sufficiently rapidly from its cities! ver.

9, comp. Isa. xvi. 2; this is Yahvé's righteous determination, and woe to the instrument (the Chaldean) that delays the execution of this commis-

Môab from its youth, and stiff lieth it on its lees, | was never poured from one vessel into the other, and went not into captivity; | wherefore its taste remained in it, and its smell is not changed. || Therefore behold days come (saith Yahvé) — and I send it upsetters that upset it, | and its vessels they empty, and their bottles they break, | so that Môab is ashamed of Kamôsh, | as they of the house of Israel were ashamed of Baethel their confidence. || How can ye say “heroes are we, | 15 and mighty men for war?” || the destroyer of Môab and its cities ascendeth—and the choice of his youth goeth down to the slaughter! | saith the king Yahvé of Hosts his name; || nigh is the distress of Môab to come, and its evil hasteth fast. ||

## 3.

Bemoan it all ye round about it, and all that know its name, | say “O how is the strong staff broken, the beautiful rod!” || Come down from glory and sit in shame, community

sion! ver. 10.—But does any one wish to hear a new reason for this punishment? Already Môab has been too long in immovable and stiffened repose, which though externally prosperous is inwardly all the more godless, like an old undisturbed wine that stands unmoved upon its lees, and the taste of which does not improve, Sseph. i. 12: such morally perilous security may not continue, Yahvé sends to the people *upsetters* who *upset* it, who turn this thickening vessel upside down, violently disturb this moral indifference, yea, at the same time break in pieces the vessels and bottles themselves, in order that Môab, thus severely shaken and aroused from its prosperous repose, may for once discover the helplessness of his God, and so acquire a better taste (judgment), vv. 11-13; ver. 13 like vii.

12, but the entire figure is probably taken from some older prophet. And then no boasting on the part of the powerful warriors of Môab will avail: as soon as the destroyer, whom Yahvé must send, *ascends*, makes the attack with his full force, the mass of his bravest soldiers *sinks* as a herd of cattle as victims for the slaughter, vv. 14-16. With this evident antithesis, as well as ver. 18 where the thought is only more briefly repeated, instead of שִׁדְּרָה we must read שִׁדְּרָה and alter the accents, comp. also vv. 8, 32. Ver. 10 בִּלְאִיָּה is not found in the LXX, and the omission is poetically almost better. The tone of vv. 14, 15, is in imitation of Isa. xix. 1. The vessels and bottles are the great and small people, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 31; Isa. xxii. 24.

3. It is to be lamented that such a well preserved, splendid power must decline, that such a glorious staff (sceptre) must be broken (after Isa. xiv. 29): but

it has become necessary; let Dibon, this chief seat of the power of Môab (Isa. xv. 2), descend from the throne to the ground, from honour to shame, and let



of the daughter of Dibon! | for the destroyer of Môab ascend-  
 eth against thee, demolisheth thy strongholds. || Upon the  
 way take thy stand and espy, community of 'Arô'er! | ask him  
 that fleeth and her that escapeth, say "how is she done  
 20 away?" || Môab is ashamed yea it is dismayed, wail and  
 lament! | proclaim at the Arnon that Môab is destroyed! || —  
 And judgment cometh unto the land of the plain, | unto  
 Cholon and unto Yâhass, and unto Mopha'ath || unto Dibon  
 and unto Nebo and unto Baeth-Diblat'hâim, || and unto Qirya-  
 thâim and unto Baeth-Gamul and unto Baeth-Me'on, || and  
 unto Qeriyoth and unto Bossra, | and unto all cities of Môab  
 25 those far off and near; || cut down is the horn of Môab, and its  
 arm broken, | saith Yahvé. ||

## 4.

Make it drunken because it boasted against Yahve, | that  
 Môab choke in his vomit, and become a laughing stock also  
 himself! || Or was not Israel a laughing stock unto thee? or  
 art thou found among thieves that thou as often as thou  
 grievously smitest him slinkest away? || —Leave cities and  
 dwell in the rock, ye inhabitants of Môab, | and be like the  
 dove that buildeth along the window of a ravine! || We have  
 heard the haughtiness of Môab who is exceedingly haughty, |  
 his pride and haughtiness, his arrogance and exaltation of  
 30 heart; || I know (saith Yahvé) his insolence and the falseness  
 of his boastings, | the falseness they did. || Therefore must I  
 wail over Môab, and for all Môab lament, | and bemoan the

'Arô'er, the great border city of Môab, with commiseration ask the crowds of fugitives of all kinds about the causes of the calamity! vv. 17-19; at the Arnon, the most southern border-stream, its sad fate cannot be hidden, ver. 20. And this judgment comes upon all the cities of Môab, as they are here almost all of them enumerated in long succession, vv. 21-25. It is plain from

the antithesis that צמא, ver. 18, cannot signify *thirst*, although perhaps the points may follow this signification; we must refer to the Aram. עמא and צמע (צבע), comp. the Arab. *ṣamī'a* and *waḍama*, which supply the idea of something *dark, dirty*. נמלטה, ver. 19, appears to be thus pointed simply on account of the rhyme, comp. § 173 h.

4-5. But the chief crime of Môab is its haughty contempt of Yahvé, as this is further described in the next two strophes. For this it deserves that the

contempt should be thrown back upon itself, by its being made, like a drunken man, the scorn of all. These somewhat strong figures follow Isa. xix. 14; Hab.

men of Qîr-Hâres: || of the tears of Ya'zer will I weep for thee thou vine of Sibma, | thou whose branches went over the sea, reached unto the sea of Ya'zer: | upon thy fruit and vine harvest the destroyer fell, || and joy and rejoicing is taken from the fruit-field and the land of Môab, | and wine I cause to fail from the wine-presses unpressed, the wild noise is noise without noise! || From the cry of Chesbon unto El'ale unto Yáhass they loudly call, | from Ssóar unto Chorónáim, 'Eglath-Shelishiya: | yea Nimrim's waters also become deserts, || and I take for Môab, saith Yahvé, | —every one that ascendeth a height and burneth incense to his God. ||

## 5.

Therefore my heart soundeth like flutes concerning Môab, | and my heart soundeth like flutes regarding the men of Qîr-Hâres; | therefore perisheth the surplus they had gained: || for every head is bald, and every beard shorn, | upon all the hands are furrows, and upon all the loins sackcloth; || upon all Môab's housetops and upon its market places is only mourning, | —because I break Môab in pieces, as a displeasing

ii. 15, 16, and were not strange in those times; they are found elsewhere in Yéremyá in a somewhat milder form, xiii. 13 and ch. xxv. But they are in this case explained more especially by the words that follow: inasmuch as Môab, which acc. 2 Kings xxiv. 2 had taken part in the last attack upon Jerusalem, just like Edóm, or even more than Edóm, had indulged its ancient hatred against Israel in the most wanton and base manner, had derided this unfortunate people with the utmost contempt, and yet when it had brought upon it all possible scorn and injury had afterwards always maintained that it had not done it, it seemed that in the way just indicated it only met with its just divine retribution, so that it is immediately added, *or was not the object of thy ridicule Israel?* or, which is still worse, *belongest thou, may be, to the thieves that thou, as thieves that protest their innocence*

when they are caught, *as often as thou smitest him severely afterwards basely and dishonestly slinkest away?* Such brief words were then intelligible enough to people who had only just experienced the history. Instead of the *K'thîb* נִמְצָאָה we must read נִמְצָאָה, a trace of which appears to be preserved in the LXX; it is a favourite figure of Yéremyá's, ii. 26. The word הִתְנַדֵּד, unlike xxxi. 18, is derived from נָדָד; and נִבְרָךְ must be read, acc. to the exactly similar passage xxxi. 20, instead of בְּכִרְיָה, the LXX appearing to have a trace of that reading also.—Therefore, flee ye Môabites into the caves! ver. 28: for your haughtiness has assuredly not been hid from Yahvé, vv. 29, 30, after Isa. xvi. 6 (the accents separate כֵּן from בְּדִי without cause); and already loud lamentation may be made over the certain destruction of all their fruitful fields, vv. 31-34, freely reproduced after Isa. xvi. 7-10; xv. 4, 6; strange to say

vessel, saith Yahvé. || —O how is it dismayed how they wail,  
 how turneth Môab the back ashamed, | so that Môab becometh  
 40 a laughing stock and a dismaying for all round about! || For  
 thus saith Yahvé: behold as the eagle will he sail | and spread  
 his wings towards Môab; || the cities are taken and the fast-  
 nesses stormed, | so that the heart of the heroes of Môab on  
 that day is like that of a woman in labour, || and Môab is  
 destroyed as a nation, | because it boasted against Yahvé! ||

## 6.

A panic and a pitfall and a prey-trap are upon thee, inhabi-  
 tant of Môab! saith Yahvé; || he that hath fled from the  
 panic falleth into the pitfall, and he that getteth up from the  
 pitfall is taken by the trap: | for I bring upon it upon Môab

יִהְיֶה, ver. 31, instead of the first  
 person only remains almost verbally  
 from Isa. xvi. 11 (comp. below ver.  
 36).\* The meaning of the words from  
 הִירָד to the end, ver. 33, appears to  
 be: the incessant uproarious noise of  
 the harvest has now no noise, has become  
 silent: the force of the repeated  
 הִירָד is thus brought out, but the  
 accents must then be altered and  
 יִדְרֶנָּה must be read.—After ver. 35,  
 containing only Yéremyá's own thoughts  
 and language (comp. i. 16; vii. 9, 31;  
 xi. 12; xix. 4, 5), has been appended as  
 new matter to give a firmer close to the  
 strophe, the description of the great  
 lamentation, after Isa. xvi. 11; xv. 7,

2, 3, proceeds, vv. 36-38, and only the  
 conclusion, ver. 38 b, again is new,  
 comp. xxii. 28. But if any one wonders  
*how* the great change for the worse in  
 the affairs of Môab can be possible, ver.  
 39, comp. vv. 1, 20, 26, the answer is,  
 that when the eagle-like conqueror  
 (Nabukodrossor) shall fly thither, the  
 proud nation will be sufficiently humbled  
 and punished for its contempt of Yahvé,  
 vv. 40-42; the end of this strophe thus  
 returns to the commencement of the  
 previous one. The *house-tops* are men-  
 tioned, ver. 38, together with the  
 market-places as the places of public  
 exhibitions of both joy and sorrow, as  
 in Isa. xxii. 1.

6. Therefore, the final conclusion  
 runs, an escape is impossible: *panic and*  
*pitfall and preytrap*, literally terror and  
 pitfall and snare (a paronomasia† that  
 is copied with its exposition "Isa."  
 xxiv. 17), endless dangers of all kinds

come upon it! vv. 43, 44. And are  
 those who flee therefrom probably safe  
 from the snare, from fresh peril, in the  
 protection of the strong fortification of  
 Chesbon?—O, no, the discourse at once  
 replies, it is just from this ancient city,

\* The exact meaning of this sentence is not clear, although in the second  
 edition the author has added the words "almost verbally from Isa. xvi. 11."—Tr.

† The author's representation of the paronomasia is: *knall und fall und falle*;  
 Hitzig's, *grauen, graben, garn*; Cheyne's (on Isa. xxiv. 17), *a fear, a fall, and a*  
*fowler*.—Tr.

- 45 the year of their punishment, saith Yahvé. || In the shadow of Chesbon have they rest from the trap that flee? | —no, fire goeth forth from Chesbon, and flame from the hearth of Sihon, | and devoureth the brow of Môab, and the crown of the head of the sons of tumult; || woe unto thee Môab, the people of Kamósh hath perished, | for thy sons are taken captive, and thy daughters into captivity. ||—But I turn the fortunes of Môab at the end of the days, saith Yahve. ||— Thus far what is due unto Môab.

the ancient seat of the Amorite king Sihon, that a mighty fire proceeds, to devour Môab from the top to the bottom, from the side to the crown of the head! vv. 45, 46, very freely after Num. xxi. 28, 29; xxiv. 17. Instead of מִפֶּחַ it is better to read מִפָּח, with Theod., without which emendation this last sentence cannot become the natural continuation of what has gone before; and instead of מִבֵּין we rightly expect מִבֵּית (in place of מִקְרִית which

is found in the model Num. xxi. 28).— But with all the greater significance is heard, after this long severe denunciation, the consoling reservation, ver. 47. The phrase שׁוּב שְׁבִית can according to such passages (comp. also xxx. 18; xxxiii. 11; Lam. ii. 14; Ez. xvi. 52; Job xlii. 10; Ps. cxxvi. 1, 4) only signify *to turn the turn* of a person in calamity, *i.e.*, to pardon and liberate him; שְׁבִית the same as שִׁיבָה, Ps. cxxvi. 1 acc. § 165 b.

#### IV.—‘Ammôn.

#### Ch. XLIX. 1-6.

xlix.

#### 1 Of the sons of ‘Ammôn.

These people, dwelling to the north of Môab, had taken advantage of the troubles of the kingdom to occupy the territory of the tribe of Gad that had been early carried off by the Assyrians, and determined not to surrender it again, 2 Kings xv. 29, comp. Amos i. 13-15. The first of the two short strophes declares that in this respect justice shall again prevail, while the second rebukes the vain confidence of the people in its fruitful district.

#### 1.

Thus saith Yahvé: Hath Israel no sons, or hath he no heir? | wherefore hath Milkem inherited Gad, and doth his



people dwell in his cities? || —Therefore behold days come (saith Yahvé)—and I cause Rabba\* of the sons of 'Ammôn to hear alarm of war, | that she becometh a waste mound, and her daughters† burn in fire: | then Israel inheriteth his heirs saith Yahvé. || Wail Chesbon, that she is laid waste in ruins! | cry ye daughters of Rabba gird you with sackcloth, lament and run away through the penfolds, | that Milkom goeth into captivity, his priests and princes together! ||

## 2.

Why gloriest thou in the valleys, in the luxuriance of thy valley thou rebellious daughter, | that trusteth to her treasures  
5 “who will come unto me?” || Behold I bring upon thee a terror (saith the Lord Yahvé of Hosts) from all sides round about thee, | that ye be driven forth every one straight away, with no one gathering the fugitives! || —But afterward I will turn the fortune of the sons of 'Ammôn, saith Yahvé. ||

1. The Massôra has the punctuation מְלִכָּם in this passage and in the passage that serves everywhere as the model, Amos i. 13-15, as if it were *their king*. But this is wholly unsuitable in ver. 3, and it may be said of an idol god (like the Ammonite Milkom, 1 Kings xi. 5) that it goes into captivity, when enemies carry away its precious image, Hos. x. 5; “Isa.” xlv. 1 sq.; in Amos, however, nothing is said of the priests, and to what extent it is probable that the word is to be taken in Amos as Milkom has been considered, Vol. I. p. 164.—The neigh-

bouring capital Chesbon, xlviii. 45, comp. xlix. 23, shall bewail the complete ruin of the capital, and the small country towns, running to and fro in despair and like the folds of the field in wild confusion, shall lament the captivity of the idol of the city, surrounded by the priests and princes; עַי, ver. 3, is therefore of the same meaning as מְלִכָּם, ver. 2, and an Ammonite city of the name of Γαῖ, as the LXX suppose, which is found nowhere else and which would be in this connexion very surprising, is not to be thought of.

2. The country is here addressed in an entirely different manner, not primarily the people or the capital: and since the *folds* of both these countries, Môab and Ammôn, which were so rich in herds upon their fruitful soil (2 Kings iii. 4), had been already mentioned at the end of the previous strophe, ver. 3, *the valleys* are now brought forward,

ver. 4, which are also comprehensively styled *the valley* by way of poetical variety. The last particular is in conformity with a peculiarity of style which Yéremyá elsewhere affects, xlvii. 5; xlviii. 8; xxi. 13; xxxi. 40: but when the LXX discover here and xlvii. 5 the עֲרָקִי 'Evaki (see *History of Israel*, I. 230 (l. p. 330 sq.)), that is scarcely

\* *i.e.*, the capital or mother city.

† *i.e.*, the smaller cities.

anything more than a learned conceit.  
— **נִזְרָה** that which overflows must signify abundance, fruitfulness, comp. Job xx. 17, 22, hence in the next member

treasures are mentioned. *A terror*, as xlviii. 43; *straight away* (*vor sich hin*), in the greatest possible haste, Amos iv. 3; “Isa.” xlvii. 15.

v.—Edóm.

Ch. XLIX. 7-22.

7 Of Edóm.

For the purpose of censuring, in four short strophes, the two prime errors of the Idumeans, their false wisdom and their proud confidence in their secure position, Yéremyá takes for the foundation of his remarks especially the older piece against Edóm which has been preserved under the name of ‘Obadya (see Vol. II, p. 278); it is easy to recognize the additions that are peculiarly his own, and we thus observe that he borrows from that piece sentences and words that are not to be found in the present book of ‘Obadya. The names of the cities *Thæman* and *Bossra* that occur here most frequently have been taken evidently from Amos i. 12 (comp. Vol. I, p. 164).

1.

Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: Is there no longer wisdom in Thæman? | hath counsel perished from the prudent, is their wisdom poured out? || Flee ye turn, endeavour to stay in the depth ye inhabitants of Dedân! | for the calamity of ‘Esau I bring upon him, the time of his punishment. || —If vintagers come unto thee, do they not leave behind gleanings? | if thieves in the night, they destroy what is sufficient for them: ||  
10 but *I* make ‘Esau bare, I uncover his hiding-places, conceal himself he cannot; | his seed is destroyed, and his brethren and neighbours and he is not! ||

1. In one of the principal cities of Edóm, Thæman, the wise and magnates who are at other times so boastful appear in the threatening day of calamity suddenly to have lost all their wisdom (comp. Obad. ver. 8), and the trading people of Dedân, neighbours and

friends of Edóm (comp. ver. 10), can only be exhorted not to journey through Edóm’s high rock-clefts (ver. 16), but rather to flee into the deepest recesses in order not to be also overtaken by the punishment, vv. 7, 8, from Isa. xxi. 13. There is no occasion for a perf.

## 2.

Leave thy orphans, I will preserve them, | and thy widows may trust in me ! || For thus saith Yahvé : behold they to whom it is not due to drink the cup—will still drink it : | and thou thyself wouldst go unpunished ? | that thou shalt not ! but thou wilt drink ! || for by myself I swear (saith Yahvé)—that a horror a scorn, an astonishment and a curse will Bossra become, | and all her cities dry-places for ever.||

## 3.

15 A message I heard from Yahvé, whilst a messenger was sent amongst the nations | “gather ye together and come against it, and arise to the war!” || for behold small have I made thee among the nations, despised amongst men : || thy thoughtlessness and the haughtiness of thy heart deceived thee, | thou that dwellest in rock-clefts, that clutchest the height of the hill : | though thou makest thy nest high as the eagle,—thence I bring thee down ! saith Yahvé ; || that Edòm

הַעֲמֹק here and ver. 30, comp. § 227 *d* ; and instead of הַפְּנִי, §§ 138 *b*, 226 *a*, הַפְּנִי might also very well be read, acc. ver. 24 ; xlv. 5, 21 ; xlvii. 3.—No artifices and cunning strategies with a view of escaping complete pillage will be of any avail, vv. 9, 10, freely reproducing ‘Obad. vv. 5, 6. Instead of a perf. נִחַבָּה, which in

this construction is very hard, נִחַבָּה might be read, acc. § 240 *a* and *c* ; for the circumlocution with the perf. in two clauses and *if he conceals himself he is still unable* is unnecessarily cumbrous, comp. ver. 23. Still the vocalisation may perhaps be retained, acc. § 240 *d*. —For

2. Edóm’s punishment is unalterably fixed : let it submissively commit the multitudes of orphans and widows, which it must of necessity obtain, to the true God, that he may care for them, this is the best counsel the prophet can

give it ; if even Israel, the chosen nation, must drink the cup of calamity, how much more Edóm ! vv. 11-13, after xxv. 15 sq. As regards שִׁמָּה and חֶרֶב ver. 13 and 17, comp. ver. 20 ; xxv. 9 ; ii. 12.

3. Or will Edóm inconsiderately rely upon its strong castles Thæman, Bossra, etc. ? This also is useless ! Vv. 14-16 following closely the commencement of the older prophecy Obad. vv. 1-4, whilst the conclusion, vv. 17, 18, reveals in every word Yéremyá’s own peculiar manner. The rare word

תַּפְּלִצְתָּךְ, ver. 16, for which the context requires some such meaning as thoughtlessness (comp. the Chaldee תַּפְּרִיץ thoughtless, ל for ר, as the LXX and the Targ. still understand it with tolerable correctness, comp. *History of Israel*, IV. p. 50 note (III. p. 505 note)), is very remarkable, and is not found in

become a horror, | that everyone passing by it be astonished and hiss at all its punishments! || as Sodóm and Gamorrha and its neighbours are overturned, saith Yahvé, | no one will dwell there, and not a son of man sojourn in it. ||

## 4.

Behold as a lion will he advance from the high-flood of Yordan to the rock-pasture: | at the twinkling of an eye will I snatch it from her, and he who is chosen set over her! | for who is like me and who will summon me? and what shepherd  
20 is that that would stand before me? || Therefore hear ye Yahvé's counsel which he hath taken concerning Edóm, and his thoughts which he hath thought concerning Thæman's inhabitants: | surely they will be seized upon these weak sheep, surely their pasture will be horrified at them! || at the sound of their fall the earth trembleth, | the cry—in the sea of reeds is heard its sound. || Behold as the eagle he will mount up and take flight and spread his pinions towards Bossra, | that the heart of the heroes of Edóm becometh on that day like the heart of a woman in labour. ||

our book of 'Obadya evidently contrary to the original text; the construction of the verse itself, with large or double members, gives the word a very suitable

place; but with regard to the following words, the position they hold in 'Obadya is more correct, the masc. **הַשֵּׁי** undoubtedly originally followed **וְדָוִד**.

4. Nabukodrossor is most plainly referred to as *he* who shall advance like a lion from the swollen (xii. 5), *i.e.*, northern, Yordan against the *rock-pastures*, *i.e.*, rocky Edóm with its secure castles, and as the chosen of Yahvé take possession of them after the present inhabitants have been expelled: what shepherd or national prince will be able to stand before this lion as led by Yahvé? On the contrary, as easily as the weakest sheep (acc. "Zech." xi. 7) will the Idumeans be seized upon as by dogs (after the figures xv. 3; xxii. 19), so that their own land shall be filled

with horror at their calamity, and the terrible sound of the overthrow with the lamentation of the fallen shall be heard as far as the Red Sea, vv. 19-21; or rather, as an eagle will the conqueror approach, ver. 22, after xlviii. 40, 41. In vv. 19-21 there is much that has an antiquated sound: thoughts and words are principally like "Zech." xi. 1-7; xiii. 7. The expression **כִּי אֶרְבִּיעַה**, *when I shall move the eyes*, *i.e.*, in the twinkling of an eye, in a moment, is supported by a parallel usage Prov. xii. 19 only, and **וַיַּעֲדֵנִי**, ver. 19, appears to be borrowed from Job ix. 19.



VI.—*Damascus.*

## Ch. XLIX. 23-27.

## 23 Of Damascus.

Nothing is known to us about the condition at that time of this kingdom, which had been so powerful centuries before; it is certain that it had lost its importance, neither had Yéremyá much to say with reference to it; comp. however xxxv. 11, whence it may be inferred that it was at that time a vassal state of the Chaldeans. After the picture of human amazement at the overthrow of this kingdom has been sketched, as the imagination beholds it as already accomplished, vv. 23-25, the higher explanation and confirmation thereof is added, vv. 26, 27. The piece, like the last one, vv. 35-39, may be considered as not exceeding one strophe.

Ashamed is Chamâth and Arpad, for an evil message they heard dismayed; | their mind is in trouble, rest it cannot. || Damascus is unnerved, turneth herself to flee, and mortal terror she conceiveth, | anguish with pangs seize her like a woman in labour: ||

25 "O how is not deserted the famous city,  
the place of my joy!" ||

Therefore her youths will fall in the streets, | and all the men of war become silent on that day, saith Yahvé of Hosts; || and I kindle fire in the walls of Damascus, | which may devour Benhadád's palaces!

At the very first prophetic message (שָׁמַעָה, ver. 23, repeated from ver. 14) of evil import concerning the approaching fall of Damascus, the important cities of the neighbourhood are thrown into great alarm, feeling that their judgment is also at hand, ver. 23, comp. ver. 3; and how completely helpless is the condition of Damascus itself when it is more closely inspected and

the bitter lamentations are heard which its people pour forth in the hour of danger, because their great city is already as it were wholly deserted and abandoned of its inhabitants who flee from it in trembling haste, vv. 24, 25; with ver. 25 comp. iv. 29 and Isa. xxxii. 13. The unusual word שָׁמַעָה, ver. 23, must have some such significance as mind, heart, probably abbreviated from

בִּינָה *understanding*, comp. Arabic *ta-baiyā* in the V. conj., also *bāha* and *wabiha*, to understand, observe: with regard to the noun דַּאֲבָה as predicate, see § 296 b. For it is not possible to sup-

pose the *sea* יָם is meant; and the words “Isa.” lvii. 20, where only the last member is repeated, do not in any way support such a supposition. The words ver. 25 are from a popular song of the time.

### VII.—*Arabia.*

#### Ch. XLIX. 28-33.

- 28 Of Qedar and the kingdoms of Chassor, which Nabukodrossor the King of Babel conquered.

Chassor, which is here, vv. 28, 30, 33, plainly mentioned along with Qedar, Isa. xxi. 16, 17, as a country or a tribe of nomadic Arabs, cannot therefore be the once powerful capital of a Canaanite kingdom this side the Yordan, *Hist. of Israel*, II. 253 (II. 356). We might be more inclined to suppose that it might in this place be only another pronunciation of יִטּוּר, a country (Iturea) that is properly mentioned along with Qedar, and belongs with the latter to the category of the *sons of the East* (Saracens) Gen. xxv. 15; 1 Chr. v. 19, just as still later the Nabathaeans appear in conjunction with the tribe of Qedar, and finally are found ruling alone. It might then be recognized in Βαιθαίωρ, conquered by Saul according to the LXX, 1 Sam. xiv. 47, if we read Βαιθασώρ instead. If these interchanges of letters cannot, however, be substantiated, the question would arise whether we may not discover in this Chassor *Hatra* or *Hatara*, which once flourished in the desert of Mesopotamia, the Arabic orthography of which *al-Hadr* points to an original ḥ; this land appears in later times as a survival of ancient Midian, comp. Ammianus Marc. xxv. 8; Assemani's bibl. orient. iii. 2, p. dccix; Abulfeda's géogr. p. 284; Par. Journ. As. 1841, ii. p. 500 sq. The humiliation of these nomadic Arabs is represented in two short strophes as easy; and that this was subsequently done is observed at the commencement in the heading.

## 1.

30 Arise advance against Qedar, and lay waste the sons of the East ! || their tents and flocks let men take, their curtains and all utensils and camels carry off from them, | and cry unto them : “horror round about !” || Take ye flight flee fast, seek to dwell in the depth ye inhabitants of Chassôr ! saith Yahvé : | for Nabukrodossor king of Babel hath concluded a decree concerning you, and thought concerning you a thought. ||

## 2.

Arise advance against a tranquil securely dwelling people, saith Yahvé, | that hath neither door nor bar, that settleth alone, || in order that their camels may become a booty and the abundance of their wealth in cattle a prey, | that I scatter them into all winds, they that are shorn on their temples, | and from all their sides bring their trouble ! saith Yahvé. || For Chassôr will become a lair of jackals, a desolation for ever, | no one will dwell there, and no son of man sojourn in it. ||

1-2. The words of this and the following passage are quite those ordinarily used by Yéremyá ; the second strophe only works out the same thing in a different way. On הַעֲמִיקוּ, ver. 30, see above ver. 8.—The description ver. 31 is the exact opposite of that of Deut. iii. 5, although in the latter passage it is precisely the cities of the north-east that are described : but there

it is not a genuine nomadic people that is referred to.—As regards *they that are shorn on the temples*, ver. 32, see on ix. 25 ; ver. 33 like ver. 18. Instead of עֲלֵיהֶם, ver. 30, almost all MSS. have the better reading עֲלֵיכֶם : yet in other cases also the discourse makes a change in the last member from the second person to the greater repose of the third.

— ‘*Aelam*.

## Ch. XLIX. 34-39.

34 That which came as word of Yahvé unto the prophet Yéremyá concerning ‘Aelam, in the beginning of the reign of Ssedeqia king of Yuda, in this wise :

The relation to Yuda of this people, which is not elsewhere met with in such denunciations, is not further known to us.

But inasmuch as the threat is in a very special manner so framed as if the chastisement were meant to proceed not from Nabukodrossor but immediately from Yahvé, and inasmuch as the piece is placed exceptionally precisely at the commencement of the reign of Ssedeqia, it is probable that the uncivilized and warlike 'Aelamites (Isa. xxii. 6) had shortly before, as allies of the Chaldeans, assisted in procuring the dethronement of Yoyakhîn and the first extensive exile of the nation, and had therein manifested special barbarity; comp. Ez. xxxii. 24.

The fact that the LXX have the heading twice, once briefly and then at length at the end of the piece, only shows that two different readings have got mixed together in the present text of this translation.

- 35 Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: Behold I break the bow of 'Aelam, the head of their strength, || and bring upon 'Aelam four winds from the four ends of the heavens, and scatter them unto all these winds, | that there be no more such a nation whither 'Aelam's outcasts come not. || For I cause 'Aelam to be dismayed before their enemies and their deadly foes, | I bring upon them evil, the heat of my wrath (saith Yahvé), | and send the sword after them, until I consume them; || I set my throne in 'Aelam, and destroy from there king and princes! saith Yahvé. ||

Nevertheless at the end of the days I will turn 'Aelam's fortunes, saith Yahvé. ||

Ver. 35: that the bow was the chief weapon of the 'Ælamites, had already been indicated, Isa. xxii. 6: but it was generally the principal weapon of many ancient nations, as it answered to our

heavy artillery. Ver. 37 c after Amos ix. 4. With great emphasis it is said *my throne*, ver. 38, executing as a judge the punishment, not as in other cases employing Nabukodrossor.

## 2. *Israel's punishment in relation to that of all other nations.*

### Ch. xxv.

If this is the fate of the heathen nations, there arise two other questions. First, what will be the fate of Israel com-



pared with theirs, less or equally severe? After all that has been said and complained above at such length with regard to Israel, the answer to this question cannot be doubtful. Yet inasmuch as the foreign nations have now been brought into comparison, it is well that it should be distinctly declared, Israel must endure the same great punishment equally with the heathen, yea, as God's people before them, because the more plainly the divine will became known to it the more it sinned. The second question concerns the nation to which, as an exception from all the rest, indeed, as the invincible instrument of the divine chastisement, prominence is here everywhere given before all others, the Chaldeans. Shall this proud heathen nation continue for ever to rule as it has begun, and to trample down the rest of the nations? Certainly, so profoundly sagacious a prophet could not, like so many other prophets of his time, foretell the immediate overthrow of the new Chaldean empire: he discerned far too clearly the courage and the strength of the young Nabukodrossor, the moral degeneracy and effeminacy of the rest of the nations, the distance of the great crisis of the history of all the kingdoms of that time. But as a genuine prophet he can still less assume that this reign of the Chaldeans will be the end of the ages and the final destination of the divine government of the world. Accordingly, to his prophetic eye, as it glances into the near and the distant future, there remains nothing but the truth, that in the end the Chaldeans also will fall, but it will not be for a considerable period. The time of their fall he conceived as a distant future quite unlike the immediate future, a future which could not then be further described or more definitely indicated than as of such an exceedingly general character that it would be the time of the third generation from that day, on the fringe of the horizon of the present, after 70 years (a generation being supposed to be about 25-30 years), xxv. 11, 12; xxvii. 7; xxix. 10; comp. thereon, as the best explanation according to the view of contemporaries, xxix. 28; Hezeqiel iv. 6; xxix. 11-16,

speaks similarly of 40 years. Yéremyá was unable to prophecy regarding the future of the Chaldeans more than this, which was at that time a very bold and definite, yet brief and circumspect oracle.

The answer of both these questions is supplied by the prophet in the first strophe in the brief and comprehensive form, that Israel will fall by the Chaldeans, just like the surrounding nations that have been considered, on account of its incorrigibility—until in a more distant future the end of the Chaldeans also will come, vv. 3-14. It appears clearly from the manner in which the heathen are spoken of, vv. 9, 11 (“all *these* nations round about”) that this oracle concerning Israel presupposes the foregoing pieces: and the reason for special reference to seven nations only, is to be found in the use of this round number and in the fact that for many reasons it appeared both unnecessary and impossible to speak with equal fulness of each of the others.—And as Yéremyá likes to close all his longer discourses with the presentation of a symbolical image, he asserts in this instance also, that at the command of Yahvé he is compelled to present to all nations, with Israel at the head, the cup full of wine of burning punishment: for, first, this image of the cup of death with which Yahvé makes drunken and hurls into the dust him that is ripe for punishment, had in this century long been in common use (see, for instance, above, xiii. 13; xlix. 12; Ps. lxxv. etc.); and, secondly, the threats and announcements of punishment on the part of the true prophet are so far from being without effect, that his terrible word must of itself become as it were a cup of death to the man whom it strikes: so that when it had at some time seemed to the prophet that Yahvé had commissioned him to present to all nations the cup of death, the entire position and relation of these things from the divine point of view appeared to him only in a compressed symbol. And this second strophe, vv. 15-29, which has grown somewhat long by the detailed reference to all the nations, is followed by a third, vv. 30-38, which

closes the piece with all the greater firmness and incisiveness, with the most solemn assurance that such a universal punishment shall come in the immediate future upon all nations, and that already the first throes of it are revealed.

The piece, like those ch. xlv-xlix, is originally from the first large edition: yet it may, according to ver. 9, contain a few additions from the last.

xxv.

1 The word which came to Yéremyá to all the people of Yuda, in the fourth year of Yoyaqîm son of Yosia king of Yuda, that is the first year of Nabukodrossor king of Babel; which the prophet Yéremyá spake to all the people of Yuda and unto all inhabitants of Jerusalem in this wise:

1.

From the thirteenth year of Yosia son of 'Amôn king of Yuda unto this day | —these three and twenty years came Yahvé's word unto me, and I spake unto you always zealously —but ye hearkened not; || and Yahvé sent unto you all his servants the prophets sending most zealously | — but ye  
5 hearkened not and inclined not your ear to hear— || saying “Turn now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings: | so shall ye dwell upon the ground which Yahvé gave unto you and your fathers for ever and ever! || and follow not other gods to serve them and to do homage unto them, | lest ye provoke me to anger by the deed of your hands, and I do you harm!” || —but ye hearkened not unto me, saith Yahvé, | in order to provoke me to anger by the deed of your hands, that it may go ill with you. || —Therefore thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: because that ye heard not my words, || behold I will send and take all the families of the North (saith Yahvé), and Nabukodrossor king of Babel my servant, | I bring them over this land and over its inhabitants, and over all these nations round about, | and curse them and make them a horror and a hissing, and to eternal desola-  
10 tions, || and destroy from them the sound of mirth and of gladness, the sound of the bridegroom and of the bride, | the sound of a mill and shining of a light, || that this whole land become a desolation and a horror, | and these nations serve the

king of Babel seventy years. || But when seventy years are full, I will visit\* upon that nation (saith Yahvé) their transgression:† | for them also will many nations and great kings subjugate, | and I recompense them according to their conduct, according to the deed of their hands.

It is indicated in the heading that this discourse was (at least substantially) delivered publicly: which we can easily suppose possible; and as this was indicated somewhat too briefly ver. 1, it is stated over again more definitely ver. 2.—The second definition of time is not found in the LXX, is nevertheless probably not to be ascribed to an early reader who might insert it to facilitate the correct reckoning of the commencement of the 70 years, ver. 11, but original, as a similar one which the LXX retain, xxxii. 1, corresponds with it.

1. Except the final oracle concerning the inquisition to which the Chaldeans also will be one day subjected, the words of this strophe have almost all been frequently met with above, as ver. 9, comp. xix. 8; ver. 10, comp. vii. 34; xvi. 9. We have already said, *ante* p. 90, that the words placed in the margin from vv. 12, 13, were not in the original text: the further grounds for this conclusion are as follows. The LXX omitted the words *על מלך בבל ו* and, further, *ועל ארץ כשדים*, which were not inserted at a very suitable place, and also the similar addition, ver. 26: and there is no conceivable reason for their having done this arbitrarily. It is true the following words appear in the present text of the LXX, but ver. 13 betrays itself by the

strange use of the name of Yéremyá as not original, and is manifestly intended in anticipatory reference to the later addition, ch. l. li. But the intermediate words *ושמתי אהו לשממות עולם* are thereby rendered doubtful, and as a fact Yéremyá never speaks thus of the Chaldeans, indeed, we meet with these words again in this form (although their thought is so often expressed by Yéremyá in innumerable other forms) only li. 26, 62. If the interpolated words are left out, the nexus of the thought is restored, we have a forcible antithesis between the present subjugation of the numerous nations by the Chaldeans and the future subjugation of the Chaldeans by other equally numerous nations, and the whole thought of the passage is expressed briefly and forcibly, yet plainly and fully, indeed, just as Yéremyá expresses it again, xxvii. 7. *ויהרמתי*, ver. 9, is doubtful, because Yéremyá never uses this word, which frequently occurs elsewhere and also ch. l., li., nor the cognate noun *קֶרֶם* curse, *anathema*. Further, the words *ואל נב* and to Nabukodrossor the king of Babel my servant, ver. 9, which are also omitted by the LXX, might appear doubtful: but from the similarity of the passages, xxvii. 6; xliii. 10, there is no sufficient ground for suspicion, if only *את* is read instead of

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\* upon the king of Babel and

† and upon the land of the Chaldeans, | and make it eternal wastes, || and I bring upon that land all my words which I have spoken concerning it, | everything written in this book, that Yéremyá prophesied concerning all the nations.



## 2.

- 15 For thus said Yahvé Israel's God unto me: Take this cup of wine of fury from my hand and cause to drink it all the nations to whom I send thee, || that they may drink and wallow and become mad | before the sword which I send among them ! || So I took the cup from the hand of Yahvé, | and caused all the nations to drink unto whom Yahvé sent me : || Jerusalem and the cities of Yuda, and its kings and princes, | to make them a desolation and a horror, and a hissing and a curse forthwith ; || Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and his
- 20 servants and princes, and all his people, || and all the vassals and all the kings of the land of Uss, | and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, Ashqalôn and Ghazza and 'Eqron and Ashdôd's remnant ; || Edóm and Môab and the sons of 'Ammôn ! || and all the kings of Tyrus and all the kings of Sidon, | and the kings of the coast beyond the sea ; || Dedân and Thæma and Buz, and all that are shorn upon their

אל. It is the logical outcome of Yéremyá's thought that Nabukodrossor should receive the high distinction of the name *the servant of Yahvé*, and at most it could only be said that the words

2. The figure of the cup of fire, or of wrath, is very soon brought back at the commencement, vv. 15, 16, to its natural proportions by the mention of the great divine *sword*; similarly at the end, vv. 28, 29. —The long list of nations, vv. 18-26, does not follow the strictest geographical order; but when the entire series is looked at, a certain order is by no means wanting. The series begins with the Holy Land, because it was as a fact very early exposed to these great world-storms, and had to suffer severely at the very commencement of the new Chaldean supremacy: in addition to which the higher consideration has its influence, that they who are nearest to the true Sanctuary are to be judged first, and to be corrected most severely (1 Pet. iv. 17); hence at the commencement, ver. 18, the significant word **כיום הזה** *now forthwith* (properly *at present*, xi. 5; xxxii. 20; xlv. 6,

were not inserted before the last edition published by the prophet himself, as they are certainly not necessary here, and rather disturb the ease of the original connexion of the discourse.

22, 23) is added, and at the end of the strophe, vv. 28, 29, the same idea is still more definitely brought forward, comp. xlix. 12. The enumeration then proceeds from the South to the North, according to the same principle, therefore, that is observed in the order of the pieces ch. xlii.-xlix., only that in this case many more nations are brought under review, and on that account alone the order is somewhat more closely adhered to. But the series closes with the most northerly nations, vv. 25, 26, for the further reason that they, according to vv. 9-14, as well as all that Yéremyá says elsewhere, are designed to serve first as the instruments of the divine chastisement of the southern nations.

A difficult word which affects the understanding of the entire series is **עַרְב**, vv. 20, 24. From Exod. xii. 38; Neh. xiii. 3, it appears that the word denotes foreign nations but such

temples; || and all the kings of Arabia, | and all the vassal-kings that dwell in the desert, and all the kings  
 25 of Zimran; || and all the kings of 'Aelam, | and all the kings of Media; || and all the kings of the North, the near and the distant, one by the other, | and all the families of the earth that are upon the face of the ground.\* ||—And say unto them: thus saith Yahvé of Hosts, Israel's God: drink ye and be drunken and vomit: and fall not rising again | before the sword that I send among you. || But when they refuse to take the cup out of thy hand, | say unto them: thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Ye must drink! || for behold at the city over which my name is called I begin to work evil: and would ye escape free? | ye will not escape, but I call the sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth! saith Yahvé of Hosts. ||

as have entered into the association and the rights of the state; when therefore kings are spoken of, ver. 24, 1 Kings x. 15; Ez. xxx. 5, or kings are to be understood from the connexion, as ver. 20; 37, we may represent the word by some such term as *vassal-kings*, or more briefly, *vassals*. In this passage the vassal princes would signify, first, with an entirely general reference to them, ver. 20, as a current term acc. 1 Kings x. 15, the least powerful of the numerous small nations around Yuda, and then, ver. 24, in another connexion, the least powerful of the strictly Arabian nations. For evidently more general names are used here and there in the discourse, and when certain of the innumerable smaller Semitic peoples are exceptionally named specially, notable events appear to be before the prophet's mind, as *e.g.*, 'Uss, Thāmā and Bûz are named only on account of the Book of Job. It is plain that the small Semitic nations reach as far down the list as זִמְרָן, Gen. xxv. 2, as we must read instead of זֹמְרִי, ver. 25, following ancient authorities, *e.g.*, the Peshito, and with another division of

the verses; on this account it is better to place the words as far as זֹמְרִי in ver. 24. The Phœnician kings *beyond the sea*, ver. 22, are, *e.g.*, those of Kypros, as we now know with more detail from the Phœnicio-Kyprian inscriptions. 'Uss, ver. 20, is placed so far from the countries, ver. 23, which according to all that we know of it from other sources were related to it, that we might conjecture another land, connected with Egypt, is intended, especially as it is here as nowhere else called הַעֻץ; the LXX evidently omitted it altogether simply on account of this difficulty. *The remnant of Ashdôd*, ver. 20, as xlviii. 5.

שֶׁשֶׁךְ, ver. 26, stands for בְּבֶל, according to the fanciful artifice of the Atbash, *i.e.*, the retroversion of the order of the Alphabet,† and it might be supposed that Yéremyá had probably from prudential motives avoided the use of the true name. But elsewhere, vv. 12-14; xxvii. 7; xxix. 13, he does not make use of such transcriptions; the entire clause as it stands forms so little an integral portion of the discourse from ver. 17 to this point that it

\* *And the king of Sheshak will drink after them.*

† Comp. Art. *Sheshach* in Smith's Bible Dict.—Tr.

## 3.

- 30 But thou wilt speak unto them all these words, | and say unto them: Yahvé will roar from the height and thunder from his holy tabernacle, | will thunder above his pasture, will sing the treading-song like vine-treaders over all the inhabitants of the earth. || Noise cometh unto the end of the earth; | for a contention hath Yahvé with the nations, he will take judgment against all flesh; | the wicked—he hath devoted them to the sword (saith Yahvé). || Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: Behold evil advanceth from nation to nation, | and a great storm will be stirred up from the utmost ends of the earth; || and the slain of Yahvé will be on that day from one end of the earth unto the other, | they will not be lamented nor put by nor buried, for dung upon the face of the ground will they serve! || —Wail ye shepherds and lament, cast yourselves into the dust ye finest of the sheep: | for your days are full, for slaughter also your fatness, that ye fall like the most precious
- 35 lambs; || that refuge perisheth from the shepherds, | escape from the finest of the sheep. || Hark the lamentation of the shepherds, and the wailing of the finest of the sheep, | that Yahvé layeth waste their pasturage, || and their peaceful pastures are destroyed | before the kindling of the anger of Yahvé! || he hath left like a lion his thicket, | yea their land is become a waste—before the sword of the mortal destruction and before the kindling of his anger. ||

really disturbs it; and the LXX omitted it. Moreover, there are the higher reasons against the genuineness

of these words that are given at ch. l. li.

3. But the prophet shall proclaim without shrinking the time of punishment that is about to break upon all nations, and verily it will be terrible in the extreme: as Amos once said, i. 2, Yahvé will begin the judgment, with a lion-voice from above, that shakes the world, coming over his pasture, over his subject world, and at the judgment, trampling down all opposition like grapes at the vintage, himself sing unto all the treading or winepress song (comp. li. 14), vv. 30-31; yea, as soon

as ever the true divine punishment advances like a tempest through all nations, the unrighteous will fall in heaps, like the unburied slain after a great battle, vv. 32, 33, comp. viii. 2.—Wail, therefore, especially ye mighty and rich upon that pasture, ye shepherds and ye finest and fattest of the sheep: the time when the fattest of the lambs also shall fall as in sacrifice is at hand, and from that lion of the heavens there is no escape! vv. 35, 36 (after Zech. xi. 3 and Amos ii. 14); already they

are heard bewailing the destruction of their pastures which had just been so peaceful, that lion has left his thicket, because the great sword of punishment must now ravage, vv. 36-38. Thus the image of the lion and of the shepherds' pasture as his domain pervades this entire strophe, אֲדִירֵי הַצֶּאֱן is explained by its antithesis xlix. 20 and עֲנֵי הַצֶּאֱן. Zech. xi. 7 which is in the prophet's mind; there is a slight difference x. 21; xxiii. 1. It follows from this that פִּכְרֵי must be read, with the LXX, instead of כִּכְלֵי, ver. 34, as also the author of li. 40 (l. 28) read in this place. I had already observed in my *Kritische Grammatik*,\* p. 186, that וּתְפִצֹתֵיכֶם, which

ordinary texts very erroneously point as a verb, can be nothing else than the nom. plur.; and if the word belongs here at all, we must consider תְּפִץ as = מַפֵּשׁ *fat*, Ps. cxix. 70, which best suits the structure of the verse, although it is contrary to the accents. Instead of the first חֲרוֹן, ver. 38, חֶרֶב must be read, acc. xvi. 16; l. 16.

The uncommon figure of the treading-song, ver. 30, would hardly have been used by the prophet unless he had shortly before, xlviii. 33, repeated it from an older prophet. This is also a confirmation of the fact that the pieces ch. xli-xlix. had their proper place originally before ch. xxv.

### THREE HISTORICAL SUPPLEMENTS CONCERNING TRUE AND FALSE PROPHETISM.

#### Ch. xxvi.—xxix.

In each of these supplements there is first a narrative of the manner in which the prophet had himself laboured, and each is closed with references to such prophets as either prophesied what was unmistakably false or else did not defend the truth with sufficient steadfastness. So far therefore as they are proof from life of the general discourse against the false prophets, xxiii. 9 sq., it might be conjectured that these supplements properly come after ch. xxiv. But the circumstance especially is in favour of their present position after ch. xxv., that they presuppose the prospect regarding the 70 Chaldean years, uttered first ch. xxv., and point back to it with allusions that occur in them alone, xxvii. 6, 7; xxix. 10, comp. xxx. 8. As regards their subject-matter also, they are

\* 1st ed. 1826, 2nd ed. 1837.—*Tr.*



designed more definitely to defend and elucidate the truth that the Temple and kingdom must in the first place fall, and accordingly quietness and patience for a long time in Yahvé is the only thing to be advised: and in this respect they occupy here their proper place. But the subject-matter itself shows that though the piece ch. xxvi. had its place already in the first larger edition of the book, yet the following pieces were not committed to writing until after the destruction of Jerusalem; and the manner of the discourse, *e.g.*, the phrase *Yéremyá the prophet*, xxviii. 5-17, shows that here as in ch. xxix. Barûkh used his pen somewhat more freely. But this is only like what we may observe in the case of the gospel of John.

1. *On the Destruction of the Temple.*

Ch. xxvi.

We have here, vv. 1-19, really only a later communication of the history of that discourse which was given at length ch. vii.-x., recording how Yéremyá when threatened with death by the ruling false prophets and priests on account of the discourse, was nevertheless saved therefrom by his steadfast and calm defence. The counter-piece is thus formed by vv. 20-24, the narrative of the fate of the prophet Uriya, who although he prophesied similarly to Yéremyá nevertheless met with a very different end. When he was violently threatened he left the country from fear, but was seized abroad, brought back, and put to death by the king Yoyaqîm, as by a divine punishment for a fear which was so unworthy a prophet. As there is no trace of the Chaldeans here and the Egyptian king appears at that time to have been on friendly terms with Yoyaqîm, vv. 20-24, this history must on that account also belong to the commencement of the reign of Yoyaqîm, as is said ver. 1.

xxvi.

1 In the beginning of the reign of Yoyaqîm son of Yosia king of Yuda came the following word from Yahvé:

- Thus saith Yahvé: Take thy stand in the court of Yahvé's house, and speak unto all cities in Yuda that are come to worship in Yahvé's house all the words which I commanded thee to speak unto them, | keep not a word back: || if so be they may hear and turn every one from his evil way, | and I repent me of the evil which I purpose to do unto them for the evil of their doings; || say thus unto them: Thus saith Yahvé: | if ye hearken not unto me, | to walk in my law which I set before
- 5 you, || to hearken unto the words of my servants the prophets whom I send unto you, | and send most zealously but ye never hearkened: || then I make this house like Shiloh, | and this city I make a curse unto all nations of the earth! ||—So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Yéremyá speak these words in Yahvé's house: but when Yéremyá had made an end of speaking all that Yahvé had commissioned him to speak unto the whole people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him saying "Thou shalt surely die! wherefore hast thou prophesied thus in Yahvé's name: like Shiloh shall this house become, and this city without any inhabitant!" and all the people gathered unto
- 10 Yéremyá in Yahvé's house.—But when the princes of Yuda heard these words, they came down from the king's house to Yahvé's house, and sat down before the new gate of Yahvé; and the priests and the prophets spake unto the princes and to all the people thus: "Death this man hath deserved, because he prophesied concerning this city as ye have heard with your own ears!" Then spake Yéremyá unto all the princes and unto all the people thus: "Yahvé hath sent me to prophesy concerning this house and concerning this city all the words which ye have heard: therefore make ye good your ways and works and hearken unto the voice of Yahvé your God, that Yahvé may repent him of the evil that he hath spoken concerning you! But as for me—I am in your hands, do with
- 15 me as it seemeth good and right unto you: only ye must know that if ye kill me, that ye bring innocent blood upon yourselves and this city and its inhabitants; for in truth Yahvé hath sent me unto you to speak all these words aloud before you!"—Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and the prophets: "This man hath not deserved death, but in the name of Yahvé our God hath he spoken unto us."

And some of the elders of the land stood up and said unto the whole assembly of the people: "Mikha who was from Morêsheth prophesied in the days of Hizqia king of Yuda and spake then to all the people of Israel thus: "Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: Ssion shall be plowed as a field | and Jerusalem become ruins, and the Temple Hill forest-heights!" || Did Hizqia king of Yuda and all the people think of putting him to death? feared he not Yahvé and prayed unto Yahvé's face, so that Yahvé repented him of the evil that he had spoken concerning them? but do we wish to bring a great evil upon our soul?

This narrative is in itself so simple and clear, that it needs no comment of any kind. We may, however, remark, that it shows how powerful also in those kingdoms the influence of the assembly of the people and its representatives (the Elders) continued to be;

comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 319 sq. (p. 276 sq.) The whole of ch. xxxvi. should be compared, especially ver. 10, with the more detailed description, xxxvi. 10. Ver. 18 reference is made to Mic. iii. 12.

20 There prophesied also at that time in Yahvé's name a certain man, Uriya son of Shema'ya from Qiryathye'arim; and prophesied concerning this city and concerning this land just like Yéremyá. Then king Yoyaqîm with all his men of war and all princes heard his words, and the king sought to kill him: but Uriya heard that feared fled and came to Egypt. Then the king Yoyaqîm sent men into Egypt, Elnathan son of 'Akhbor and men with him to Egypt: they fetched Uriya from Egypt and brought him to the king Yoyaqîm, and he smote him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people.—But the hand of Achiqam son of Shaphan was with Yéremyá, that he should not be given into the hand of the people to slay him. ||

Comp. regarding Elnathan also xxxvi. 12, 25. It appears from the comparison of 2 Kings xxii. 12 sq.;

Jer. xxxvi. 10; xxxix. 14; xl. 5 sq., how steadfast in the fear of Yahvé Achiqam was with his whole house.

## 2. Concerning the yoke of the nations.

### Ch. xxvii., xxviii.

This is the most important of this series of narratives, and is exactly like a confirmation of ch. xxv. After Ssedeqia had

been installed by Nebukodrossor as his vassal, fresh and widespread discontent under the Chaldean yoke nevertheless soon broke out again amongst the people, especially amongst many of the magnates, supported by a multitude of evil priests and false prophets. And when further, in the fourth year of the new reign, xxviii. 1, ambassadors with similar sentiments and aims from the surrounding nations arrived in Jerusalem, for the purpose of agreeing upon some plan against the Chaldean rule, if possible, it appeared to the prophet high time to oppose with all his might such imprudent hopes and counsels. And Yéremyá believed at that time that he could not express the certainty concerning the immediate future, as it ever dwelt in him with the most vivid clearness, in a more striking way than by taking a yoke, the symbol of subjugation, upon his own neck and defending before everyone in this strange equipment the bitter truth to which he submitted himself without a murmur, the truth, namely, that for the present there lay nothing in the divine purpose but submission. And how he appeared thus boldly before everyone and proclaimed the truth, before the ambassadors of the foreign nations themselves, xxvii. 2-11, before Ssedeqia, xxvii. 12-15, before the priests and the people assembled in the Temple, xxvii. 16-22, in all cases speaking the thing that was fitting, how in doing this there was one of the false prophets who opposed him publicly and impudently, with whom he had a most severe conflict, but a conflict that did not fail to receive the sign and seal of victory won purely by higher divine power, ch. xxviii.—all this he here narrates at length. His labours also appear to have been rewarded at that time with speedy success, since we learn from li. 59 that Ssedeqia made a journey in the same year to Babylon, manifestly to do homage afresh, and then remained there in peace for some years.

xxvii.

- 1 In the beginning of the reign of Ssedeqia son of Yosia king of Yuda came the following word unto Yéremyá from Yahvé:



Thus said Yahvé unto me : Make thee bonds and yokes and put them upon thy neck ! and send them unto the king of Edóm, and unto the king of Môab and unto the king of the sons of ‘Ammôn, and unto the king of Tyrus and unto the king of Sidon by the messengers that have come to Jerusalem unto Ssedeqia king of Yuda, and command them for their masters as follows : Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel’s God : thus  
5 shall ye say unto your masters : || I have created the earth, man and the beasts which are upon the face of the earth, by my great power and mine outstretched arm, | and give them to him that appeareth right unto me ! || And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nabukodrossor king of Babel my servant, | and also the beasts of the field have I given to him for his service, || that all the nations serve him, and his son and his grandson, | until also the end of his land cometh, and many nations and great kings subjugate him ; || the nation therefore and the kingdom that serveth not him, Nabukodrossor the king of Babel, and him that submitteth not his neck under the yoke of the king of Babel, | —by sword by famine and by pestilence will I visit that nation (saith Yahvé), until I have delivered them all into his hand ! || —But  
10 hearken ye not unto your prophets and soothsayers, unto your dreamers and unto your necromancers and enchanters | who say thus unto you : “ye shall not serve the king of Babel !” || for they prophesy a lie unto you, | in order that I remove you from your soil, and drive you out that ye perish ! || But the nation that bringeth its neck into the yoke of the king of Babel and serveth him, | I will cause it to dwell upon its soil (saith Yahvé), that it till it and dwell thereon. ||

And unto Ssedeqia king of Yuda I spake in just the same way saying : Bring ye your necks into the yoke of the king of Babel, and serve ye him and his people, that ye may live ! || wherefore will ye thou and thy people die by the sword by famine and by pestilence, | as Yahvé hath spoken of the nation that serveth not the king of Babel ? || And hearken not unto the words of the prophets that say unto you thus : “ye shall not serve the king of Babel !” | for a lie they prophesy unto  
15 you ! || for I have not sent them (saith Yahvé), but they prophesy in my name falsely, | in order that I drive you out that ye perish, ye together with the prophets that prophesy unto

you. || — And unto the priests and unto all this people I spoke thus. Thus saith Yahvé : hearken not unto the voice of your prophets that prophesy thus unto you : “ behold the vessels of Yahvé’s house will now shortly be brought back from Babel ! ” | for a lie they prophesy unto you ! || hearken not unto them, serve the king of Babel that ye may live ! | wherefore shall this city be laid waste ? || And if they are prophets and have Yahvé’s word : | let them now urge Yahvé of Hosts that the vessels which remain in Yahvé’s house and at the king of Yuda’s and in Jerusalem go not to Babel ! || for thus saith Yahvé of Hosts of the pillars and concerning the sea and concerning the stands | and the rest of the vessels that remain  
 20 in this city, || which Nabukodrossor the king of Babel took not when he carried captive Yekhonya son of Yoyaqîm king of Yuda from Jerusalem to Babel | together with all the nobles of Yuda and of Jerusalem ; || yea thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel’s God concerning the vessels still remaining in Yahvé’s house, at the king of Yuda’s and in Jerusalem : || to Babel will they be brought and there be, | until I visit them (saith Yahvé), and bring them up and restore them unto this place ! ||

xxvii. 1 is plainly merely a heading, and must have been marked as such in the original book also. The fact that יִרְיָקִים is found in it instead of צִדְקִיָּהוּ, can only have arisen from an early error in transcription, perhaps from xxvi. 1, comp. xxviii. 1.—As Yerémyá, acc. ver. 2, is not commanded to make specially five yokes for the five ambassadors but to make for himself an indefinite number, comp. xxviii. 10-12, it is implied in ver. 3 that it was intended that by his appearance he should present to each ambassador a yoke instead of other commissions, to see whether he would send it to his sovereign as a sign of what people were thinking in Jerusalem ; at all events this supposition is all that the brief narrative requires. Comp. Vol. I., p. 47.—It follows from ver. 6, xxviii. 14, comp. Ps. l. 10, that the animals are included, ver. 5, to express the greatest

universality. Ver. 8, פֶּיֶד with הָם must manifestly be equivalent to הַסִּגִּיר, as the Targ. properly supposes, only that it adds at the same time the idea of totality ; the phrase is quite dissimilar from that ix. 15 ; xlix. 37. With regard to וְאֵת הָאִשָּׁר comp. § 277 d.—Ver. 10, *in order that*, for the object of this perverseness, although little considered on the part of men, can be no other than that the destruction comes all the quicker (as indeed was soon the case) ; similarly ver. 13, xxviii. 13, especially xxvii. 15.—A very instructive illustration of the ease with which an exhortation, vv. 12-15, may at once change from the sing. to the plur. is given xxii. 1 sq. ; but the words were not intended to have such purely personal reference as in xxxiv. 1-7, but were directed against the king and all magnates and courtiers in general.—With vv. 16-22 comp. 2 Kings xxiv. 13 ;

we see from this passage that the treasures that could be moved only with difficulty, the bronze pillars, the bronze sea, or great laver, and the bronze bases had been left in the Temple (comp. *History of Israel*, III. 236 sq., 243, IV. 264 (III. 321 sq. ; 332 ; 793)) : but the most telling thrust that he could direct against these false prophets was this, that he showed that they did not even foresee the carrying away of these treasures nor sought to hinder it by their prayers : and at the time when this was written, the result had already shown with whom the truth lay, 2 Kings xxv. 16, 17.

The term שָׂרִים, *princes*, xxiv. 1 ; xxix. 2, comp. lii. 10, interchanges with the other חֲרִים, *nobles, free-born*, ver. 20, comp. xxxix. 6, in such a way that it might be thought even that the two

words are the same in accordance with a well-known interchange of consonants. But this supposition is unnecessary: only as regards the thing represented the two words coincided at that time, the princes or officers enjoying then a freedom from tribute. When in conjunction with these nobles, xxix. 2, the *eunuchs*, i.e., the courtiers (comp. *History of Israel*, III. 271 (III. 370 sq.) are enumerated, we must be on our guard against classing them with the *princes of Jerusalem and Yuda*, although an *and* is absent ; comp. xxxviii. 7 ; xli. 16.

The LXX, whose habit it is arbitrarily to abbreviate so much in this book (see p. 91), do this especially in this narrative. But the arbitrariness of their procedure is very evident at every point.

xxviii.

- 1 And in that year in the beginning of Ssedeqia's reign the king of Yuda [*in the fourth year in the fifth month*] Chananya son of 'Azzur the prophet from Gib'on said unto me in Yahvé's house before the priests and all the people as follows: thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: I surely break the king of Babel's yoke! || within two years' time I bring back to this place the vessels of Yahvé's house, which Nabukodrossor king of Babel hath taken from this place and carried to Babel; || and Yekhonya son of Yoyaqim king of Yuda and all captives of Yuda that are gone to Babel, I bring back to this place
- 5 (saith Yahvé); for I break the king of Babel's yoke. || —Then said the prophet Yéremyá unto the prophet Chananya before the priests and before all the people that stood in Yahvé's house, —the prophet Yéremyá said: "Verily! Yahvé do so! may Yahvé confirm thy words which thou prophesiest as to bringing the vessels of Yahvé's house and all the captives from Babel unto this place! Only—hear now this word that I speak aloud before thee and before all this people: the prophets who were before me and thee from of old and prophesied concerning many lands and concerning great kingdoms of war and of famine and pestilence: the prophet that prophesied of pros-

- perity, according as the prophet's word came to pass was the prophet known whom Yahvé had sent in truth!" Then the prophet Chananya took the yoke from off the prophet Yéremyá's neck and broke it; and Chananya spake thus before all the people: "Thus saith Yahvé: even so will I break Nabukodrossor king of Babel's yoke within two years' time from off the neck of all nations!" || But the prophet Yéremyá went his way. —But Yahvé's word came unto Yéremyá, after the prophet Chananya had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Yéremyá, as follows: "Go and speak thus unto Chananya: thus saith Yahvé: Fetters of wood hast thou broken, | and preparest instead of them others of iron! || for thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: a yoke of iron I lay upon the neck of all these nations that they serve Nabukodrossor the king of Babel, and they will serve him: | even the
- 15 beasts of the field I give to him!" || And the prophet Yéremyá said unto the prophet Chananya: "hear now Chananya! | Yahvé hath not sent thee, but thou hast caused this people to rest upon lies: || therefore thus saith Yahvé: behold I dismiss thee from the face of the earth, | this year diest thou, because thou hast spoken treason concerning Yahvé!" || And the prophet Chananya died in that year in the seventh month.

As the fourth year, xxviii. 1, cannot very well, at least in the strict sense, be the beginning of the reign, at all events a writer could not write both in the same breath, we must suppose that the precise definition of the year and month was supplied subsequently, it may be by Barukh, as in the very similar instance, xxxix. 1, 2; the seventh month is mentioned ver. 17, it is true, but probably only because it was considered at the same time as a sacred month.—Yéremyá wishes first, ver. 6, from his whole heart, that what the false\* prophet has said may really take place: but because as a genuine prophet he sees only too clearly that it cannot be, he reminds his opponent, vv. 7 sq., that it is easier to flatter and to promise good things

than to speak sternly and conscientiously after the manner of the ancient prophets, and that in former and better times a prophet of this noble type who promised happiness simply was nevertheless not deemed a genuine and divinely sent messenger until the result accredited him. And as the opponent cannot defend himself by another means than rude, defiant force and empty repetition, Yéremyá does best to take his departure for the present, vv. 10, 11. But he could not depart with the purpose of not again meeting the false prophet who had so traitorously misused the divine name; and as a rather sudden death of the unprincipled man followed Yéremyá's serious and threatening final words, it

\* Germ. *Irrprophet*, which is a somewhat more neutral name than *false prophet*. —Tr.



was possible, with a certain amount of justice, to discover in the event an exercise of divine retribution, vv. 12-17, comp. Acts v. 1-16, 2 Chron. xxi. 15-19, comp. the instance mentioned, *Hist. of Israel*, IV., 267 (III., 798). It is better to read, with many MSS. and according to Yéremyá's habitual phraseology, רָעָב instead of רָעָה *evil*, ver. 8, this generic term being unsuitable between two that express specific evils; Jerome has even combined both readings in the Vulg. unsuccessfully, and on the other hand omitted the third word. But it must be specially noted, vv. 8, 9, that the words ver. 8 present simply a subject that is left incomplete, ver. 9 supplying the explanation of this subject as regards

its relation to the present case; and it is equally important to observe that ver. 9 treats only of those ancient prophets of such an elevated and powerful type. The more the discourse confines itself to them, the calmer it must become, which alone could produce the proper effect in this case. But the false prophet would not acknowledge the force of this reference to the history of ancient times, and could find no other means of meeting its truth than the use of rude force against the prophet that was at the very time inconvenient to him.—Ver. 10, מוֹפֶת is construed as a masc. especially because עַל is present to the mind of the speaker; comp. also § 174 g.

### 3. *The letter to Babel.*

#### Ch. xxix.

Probably Yéremyá had had a somewhat earlier opportunity of announcing similar truths by letter to the Israelites that had shortly before been led captive to Babel. Rumours of an immediate successful revolt on the part of Ssedeqia and of the defeat of the Chaldeans must have been circulated in Babel amongst the disaffected exiles, who had not yet become in any degree reconciled to their new country, indeed, had scarcely formed a temporary settlement in it. These rumours were cleverly kept alive and added to by two false prophets, otherwise morally corrupt, who suddenly felt called upon to prophesy there, vv. 15-23. As Yéremyá clearly perceived that the condition of his fellow countrymen abroad, whom he watched over with the same care as those at home, could only be made worse by such means, he wrote to them advising composure, vv. 4-7, warning them to beware of false prophets and false expectations and placing before them the true hope, vv. 8-14, and finally more definitely opposing the two false

prophets who were doing great harm particularly by spreading false rumours and prospects and who were greatly valued in Babel, vv. 15-23. We have evidently here only the outlines and main thoughts repeated from memory of the letter (a precursor of the Apostolic Epistles of the New Testament) that was actually sent; for the epistolary form is not preserved. An appendix is added, vv. 24-32, which denounces another false prophet of the same class although he had not fallen into the same gross vices as the two former, but had instead written to Jerusalem with instigations against Yéremyá on account of this epistle. The entire piece thus supplies the proof of the care and firmness with which the prophet defended at a distance also the same truths that he proclaimed in Jerusalem: and in this respect it is placed with a deliberate purpose at the end.

The style of this piece is very loose, apparently even completely losing all connexion. Yet this is only somewhat more the case than is elsewhere met with in our prophet, and when more closely examined the thread of the discourse is soon restored by a recurrence to the proper thought at the right place. The cause of this looseness is to be sought especially in the practice of dictation to which our prophet had accustomed himself; but also in the very great amount and variety of the subjects which he had at the same time to deal with in as brief a space as possible, as appears very clearly in this piece especially. But we thus see in his case only the same phenomenon that meets us subsequently in the New Testament in the writings of Paul and John.

xxix.

- 1 And these are the words of the letter which the prophet Yéremyá sent from Jerusalem to the surviving Elders of the exiles and to the priests and prophets and to all the people which Nabukodrossor led captive from Jerusalem to Babel,—after the king Yekhonya and the Lady and the courtiers with

princes of Yuda and Jerusalem and the artificers had departed from Jerusalem—by El'asa son of Shaphan and Gemarya son of Chilqia whom Ssedeqia king of Yuda sent to Babel unto Nabukodrossor king of Babel :

- Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God unto all the exiles  
 5 whom I led captive from Jerusalem to Babel: || Build ye houses and dwell, | and plant gardens and eat their fruit! || take ye wives and beget sons and daughters, | and take for your sons wives, and your daughters give unto husbands that they bear sons and daughters, | and ye increase there and not diminish! || And seek ye the welfare of the city whither I led you captive, and pray for it unto Yahvé: | for in its welfare will ye have welfare! || — For thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: Let not your prophets that are in your midst and your soothsayers deceive you, | nor hearken to your dreams which ye caused to be dreamed! || for falsely they prophesy unto you in my name, | I have not sent them, saith Yahvé. ||  
 10 For thus saith Yahvé: not before seventy years are accomplished for Babel will I visit you, | and fulfil unto you my good word to bring you back unto this place. || For I know the thoughts that I think concerning you (saith Yahvé): | thoughts of prosperity and not unto evil, to give you a future and hope, || that ye call upon me and go and pray unto me, | and I then hearken unto you, || and ye seek me—and find, | when ye search for me with all your heart; || I let myself be found of you (saith Yahvé), | turn your fortunes, and gather you from all the nations and all the places whither I have driven you (saith Yahvé), bring you back unto the place  
 15 whence I led you captive. || —That ye say “Yahvé hath raised us up prophets in Babel—: || yea thus saith Yahvé of the king that sitteth upon David's throne, and of all the people that dwelleth in this city, | your brothers that are not gone with you into captivity; || thus saith Yahvé of Hosts: behold I send upon them the sword the famine and the pestilence, | and make them like the rough figs that are not eatable for badness; || persecute still the fugitives with the sword, the famine and the pestilence, | and make them a play-ball unto all kingdoms of the earth, for a curse and for an amazement and for a hissing and for a scorn amongst all nations whither I have driven them: || on the ground that they hearkened not unto my

- words (saith Yahvé) | they to whom I send my servants the prophets with most zealous commission, but they hearkened not
- 20 (saith Yahvé). || But hear ye Yahvé's word, | all exiles whom I dismissed from Jerusalem unto Babel! || thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God of Achab son of Qolaya's and Ssedeqia son of Ma'seya, who prophesy unto you in my name lies: | behold I deliver them into Nabukodrossor king of Babel's hand, that he smite them before your eyes: || and there take then from them a curse all the exiles of Yuda in Babel of this kind "Yahvé make thee like Ssedeqia and like Achab whom the king of Babel roasted in the fire!" || because that they practised folly in Israel, | committed adultery with others' wives, and talked lies in my name which I did not command them: | as surely as I know it and am witness! saith Yahvé. ||
- 25 And unto Shema'ya of Nechemam thou shalt say thus: Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: | because that thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people in Jerusalem, and unto Ssephanya son of Ma'seya the priest and unto all the priests saying: || "Yahvé hath made thee priest in the stead of the priest Yoyada', in order that ye should be overseers in Yahvé's house for every madman and prophetizer,\* | and thou puttest him upon the rack and into the prison: | why therefore hast thou not reproved Yéremyá of 'Anathôth that will prophetize† for you? || upon this account that he hath sent the letter unto us to Babel saying "it is a long time yet: build ye houses and dwell, and plant gardens and eat their fruit!" || (now the priest Ssephanya read this letter aloud to the
- 30 prophet Yéremyá) so Yahvé's word came unto Yéremyá as follows: Send thou unto all the exiled as follows: thus saith Yahvé concerning Shema'ya of Nechemam: | because that Shema'ya prophesied although I have not sent him, and caused you to trust in lies: || therefore thus saith Yahvé: behold I will punish Shema'ya of Nechemam and his seed! | he will have no one who should dwell in the midst of this people, neither will he look upon the good which I show towards my people (saith Yahvé): | because he hath spoken treason concerning Yahvé! ||

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\* Germ. *weissagesüchtiger*, one who has a mania for prophesying.—Tr.

† Germ. *der euch zu weissagen rennt*.—Tr.



The letter is written, according to ver. 1, principally to the *Elders*, and it might be thought that יְרֵמְיָהּ might mean in this connexion something like the *Chief Elders*, a committee selected from the whole body of the Elders, comp. xxvi. 17; however, in prose יְרֵמְיָהּ can only signify *the residue*, i.e., as xxxix. 9 those that are still alive; and we do not at present know what calamity, at that time well known, led the prophet to use this term. We are unable to conclude with certainty from the kind of note of time supplied ver. 2 that this calamity occurred during the first years of the exile, for instance, when the envoys, ver. 3, brought the yearly tribute to Babel: for this deportation is so particularly described, ver. 2, only to distinguish it from the later one, comp. xxii. 24-26; xxiv. 1. Further, comp. *ante* p. 233. The envoys named ver. 3 were probably the sons of the distinguished men mentioned 2 Kings xxii. 3 sq.

The *good* word, ver. 10, is fully explained xxxiii. 14, sq. He who is the Good One has much better purposes towards them than they are now able to believe or comprehend: he will yet grant prosperity, yet grant a future (after Prov. xxiii. 18; xxiv. 14, 20) and a hope, ver. 11, and how glorious a future! the consummation of all that is good by a true, inward reformation, reconciliation, and invigoration, which must be followed by external prosperity also, vv. 12-14, comp. xxxii. 38 sq., and similar passages. Go, ver. 12, to a suitable place of gathering, as it is described Ps. cxxxvii. 1 and elsewhere, comp. *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, VI., p. 375 sq. 2nd Ed., p. 406, 3rd Ed.—But with regard to your boast that prophets have been raised up at Babel also by Yahvé, ver. 15: yes (כֵּן), and I must say at once that what they prophesy of Jerusalem, namely, that a

successful revolt against the Chaldeans and conquest of them is to be expected,—that the very contrary of that will take place according to the divine purpose, vv. 16-18, just because the people here in Jerusalem will pay no heed to the divine word, ver. 19: be warned therefore in time and know that the two prophets who are with you and are in other respects so immoral, who spread abroad such false oracles, will themselves be punished as common criminals by the invincible Chaldean king for their seditious discourses, serving long after their death as fearful proverbial examples of terrible punishment, vv. 20-23, comp. “Isa.” lxv. 15. Thus the words, 15-23, although they have certainly been uttered with some haste, are still connected in thought, the zeal of the speaker leading him to forget to mention after ver. 15 a circumstance that may be immediately inferred from its opposite, namely, that these false prophets had prophesied a successful revolt on the part of the king and people in Jerusalem; it would also appear that שְׂמַעְתֶּם, ver. 19, was written by some mistake for שְׂמַעוּ, the 2nd per. producing too disturbing an effect here. But all this is explained by the supposition that the piece was written down as a simple copy of the prophet's oral discourse and its growing earnestness; and, in any case, everything is as it should be in these words, vv. 15-23, with the above reservation.—The phrase לִפְנֵי מִי, ver. 10, is literally *according to the relation of the fulfilment of the period*, i.e., *not before this period is fulfilled* (in no other relation than this), as we may freely translate it.—The conclusion of the letter, ver. 23, וְאֲנִי הוּא יָדַע K'thīb (in which case הוּא would be written for הוּא) is properly: *and I am he who knoweth and testifieth it!* and it has here at the end manifestly

the force of an oath, comp. on Joel iv. 20, Vol. I., p. 142. But the same meaning is obtained if הִיָּדָע the *Q'rē* is read, as it is unnecessary to repeat the article before עַד : *since I am he that knoweth it and that is witness!*—The simile of the figs, ver. 17, refers back to xxiv. 2 sq.; שָׁעַר formed acc. § 169 d, means *rough*,\* the opposite of *soft, ripe*, inasmuch as סָעַר can have this meaning, comp. שָׁעַר *hair*.

The postscript is more in appearance than reality written entirely as a subordinate piece, circumstances being narrated vv. 29, 30, that ought naturally to have found a place somewhere before ver. 24. But the sense is plainly brought out by this backward reference, and if ver. 29 is taken as a parenthesis, it appears evident that the words vv. 30 sq. simply supply the apódosis to the unfinished sentences vv. 25-28. Shema'ya had with great astuteness reminded the deputy high-priest Ssephanya (xxi. 1; lii. 24; 2 Kings xxv. 18), that he had really attained to his present position in the place of Yoyada' (of

whom we know nothing further, but who must have been, according to these indications, inclined to favour the better prophets) to exercise a more efficient control over the police of the Temple, to have officers in the Temple who should watch and inform against such bad prophets as Yéremyá; we have seen one such officer xx. 2, 3. But the high-priest had thought it better in this instance to communicate this written libel to Yéremyá himself; and he defended himself against such wickedness with the only weapon at his command, that of prophesy.—The punishment mentioned ver. 32, like that of Mic. ii. 5, is, in conformity with this case, of a different kind from that of the first two prophets, vv. 21, 22. This *roasting in fire* (comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 220 sq. (189)) is a mode of capital punishment that is contrary to the laws of the Old Testament, but was well known in Eastern countries; at the time when our letter was written probably these two prophets had already actually suffered this death.

#### IV. THE HOPE.

##### Ch. xxx.—xxxiii.

##### 1. *The hope as purely prophetic anticipation.*

##### Ch. xxx. xxxi.

At the end it is time to bring forward emphatically the eternal hope of the community in its simplicity and its unalterable validity. It had already in the earlier pieces been frequently mentioned whenever a convenient opportunity occurred, and had been described here and there somewhat more definitely: but it is of sufficient importance and necessity

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\* In the Grammar, l.c., the meaning is given as *schauerig, tremendus*.—Tr.

to be considered apart and to be brought forward with reference to its various bases and the whole of its vast meaning. This discourse is set apart for this purpose, in which the prophetic glance, after so much that was mournful and depressing, is raised all the freer and brighter to the consideration of the eternal hope, that is so certain notwithstanding, in order that all hearers and readers may also finally be pointed simply to the consolation that cannot pass away.

For this purpose the prophet attentively considers all portions of the nation that is at present in such an unhappy condition, though it is nevertheless destined to be the lasting foundation, and germ of the true community. The prophetic eye embraces with love and pity even the descendants of the earlier Northern kingdom who had long ago been scattered abroad, and expects for them also the same great redemption as for Yuda and the holy city. In this respect this piece is at the end exactly like the first longer piece at the head of the book, ch. iii.-vi. The prophet further considers with special distinctness the bases of the eternal hope, and accordingly represents in beautiful figures the divine love as the most profound and ultimate foundation of the redemption of a community, which has been really called, in conformity with the order of the whole universe, to be the indestructible commencement of the true divine community upon earth, and which is really now too greatly dishonoured and too severely afflicted to permit that divine love to delay too long with its pity and its omnipotent redemption, see especially xxx. 12-17; xxxi. 15-20. He considers, finally, the conception to be formed of this redemption and of the consequent consummated happiness of the community: and then arrives ultimately under various figures, at the most expressive and purest, that of a new covenant that is to be concluded in the pure supremacy of the spirit, more imperishable than the former covenant of Yahvé with the community which is already as good as abrogated, xxxi. 31-34, a conception which further indicates at the same time

the truly new and great advance of the views and hopes of this prophet.

The discourse flows on in this way through four strophes. Each of the first three starts from the calamities of the present which will be still greater in the immediate future, but they commence with these calamities only to set over against them the comforting picture of the great redemption that must of necessity follow, xxx. 5-xxxi. 6. The fourth strophe is occupied solely with this cheering picture, describing in the brightest colours the future prosperity, xxxi. 7-14. But then the discourse makes a new start, with greater animation and still more sublime pictures from the very first. Its purpose is to present the great truth entirely afresh, more briefly, and still more forcibly. This is done in three strophes. This gives an opportunity of making more pointed reference to the two halves of the nation which had so long been separated. The first strophe describes simply the complaint and the hope of the Northern kingdom, the second speaks of Yuda and then of both kingdoms together in new similes of prosperity, while the third collects into one view the highest and most unique aspects of these divine hopes and promises, xxxi. 15-40. It will be seen subsequently, however, when we come to ch. xxxii., xxxiii., that there is evidence from xxxiii. 19-26, that this second half also had originally four strophes. It may be at once observed in the somewhat more lengthy heading, xxxi. 1-4, that in this piece Yéremyá did not so much put together publicly delivered discourses as publish in writing the distant hopes which had long lain in his soul and been often produced in private.

As regards their main thoughts, these lines of most fresh and vigorous discourse had without doubt already been committed to writing in the first larger edition of the book: this is visible in the special attention to both kingdoms, which is as marked here as ch. iii.-vi. But probably some additions were made in the later edition.



xxx.

1 The word which came unto Yéremyá from Yahvé, saying: || Thus saith Yahvé Israel's God saying: | write all the words which I have spoken unto thee in a book, || namely, that days come (saith Yahvé) — when I turn the fortunes of my people Israel and Yuda (saith Yahvé), | and bring them back unto the land that I had given their fathers that they inherit it. || And these are the words that Yahvé spake of Israel and of Yuda :

Vv. 1-4 contain the heading and statement of contents more at length than is usual, because this piece is of quite an exceptional character. The promise of the return and happy restoration which is here proclaimed regarding both kingdoms, has not been previously publicly spoken by Yéremyá in this way, as is the case nevertheless substantially in the above pieces :

but it shall be here written down just as the prophet had previously beheld it in vision in his spirit and heard it from Yahvé. It is not surprising that the statement of the contents, ver. 3, shall itself be given with a certain prophetic elevation; comp. the heading of Ps. cii. and of Prov. i. 1-7.

## I. 1.

5 Yes, thus saith Yahvé : A sound of terror we heard, | trembling and no peace ! || ask ye now and see whether a male will bring forth ? | wherefore did I see every man with his hands upon his loins like her that bringeth forth, and all faces turn to paleness ? ||—Woe ! for great is that day so that none is like it, | and a time of distress is it for Yaqob—but he will be saved from it ! || And on that day (saith Yahvé of Hosts) I will break his yoke from off thy neck and burst thy fetters ; | strangers will no more subjugate them, || but they serve then Yahvé their God | and David their king whom I will raise up  
10 for them. ||—But thou fear thou not, my servant Yaqob (saith Yahvé), and be not dismayed Israel ! | for behold I help thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity, | that Yaqob returneth and resteth, and is secure without a disturber. || For with thee am I (saith Yahvé) to save thee ; | though I make a full end with all the nations whither I have dispersed thee, yet with thee I make not a full end, | but correct thee as is due, and leave thee not wholly unpunished. ||

1. The commencement just like that of the second half xxxi. 15. It is true loud lamentation is at present heard over the misery which has already

begun but will be more severe still in the future, the men also are filled with terror as if they were women in travail, vv. 5, 6. Alas, *that day*, i.e., in

## 2.

For thus saith Yahvé: Incurable becometh thy wound, | inconsolable is thy hurt, || no one taketh up thy case for binding up, | remedies to put on hast thou none; || all thy patrons have forgotten thee, after thee they enquire not, | for I smote thee as an enemy smiteth, as a barbarian correcteth | because  
 15 thy guilt was great, thy sins were multiplied: || why criest thou over thy wound, that thy pain is incurable? | because thy guilt was great, thy sins were multiplied, I did this unto thee! ||  
 —Therefore will all they that devour thee be devoured, and all thine oppressors will feed upon their own flesh, | thy

ancient prophetic language, the day of punishment (comp. xxxi. 33; xlv. 10) can be compared with nothing else in respect to its severity: and yet the nation shall still be saved from it, in order that after *his yoke, i.e.*, the yoke of the Chaldean (just like Isa. x. 27) has been broken and all slavery to men has been ended they may serve Yahvé alone and the second David whom he will give to them, *i.e.*, the Messiah, vv. 7-9, after Hos. iii. 5. Therefore let all despair be banished from this community although it is now scattered afar off: in it is an eternal hope, the indestructible basis of rejuvenescence, so that it can be justly corrected according to that divine righteousness that leaves nothing unpunished (Nah. i. 3) and yet

not fully destroyed like other nationalities, vv. 10, 11. These noble words, vv. 10, 11, have thus their proper place: and if Yéremyá, acc. p. 222, ventured first to call Nabukodrossor *Yahvé's servant*, with greater fitness and in so far in a new sense he here places Israel by his side as *Yahvé's servant*, and as not a less, but in a certain sense still greater, because undying, servant: and he thus creates both a new word and a new conception for Israel, which the great anonymous prophet, "Isa." ch. xlii., xliii., will amplify in his own manner. It will be shown in the remarks on the passage, how these two verses slightly altered could be repeated below, xlv. 27, 28.

2. If the holy city is specially considered, Yahvé must be compelled by the most mournful condition in which it is found to feel pity, if he observes how no one (not even those from whom she might most naturally expect it, her former *patrons* and flatterers, comp. xxii. 20, 22, Lam. i. 2, 19) takes pity upon her to bind up the dangerous wounds, which Yahvé himself inflicted in his displeasure, and to ease them by carefully applied remedies: true as it nevertheless remains, that Yahvé (as was shown in the earlier pieces) was

compelled to chasten as severely as he had done on account of her many transgressions, and that she had no just cause to complain on that account, vv. 12-15. But precisely because her condition now excites too deeply the divine compassion and her enemies so shamelessly imagine that she is entirely outcast (even by the gods) and helpless, the divine retribution will come in its time for these enemies, who so entirely misconceive Yahvé's character, and also healing for Ssion, vv. 16, 17; the distress in which the holy land is at pre-

spoilers serve for spoiling, and all thy plunderers I give for plunder ! || Yes, I put a plaster upon thee, and from thy hurts will I heal thee (saith Yahvé), | because men called thee “out-cast,” Ssion is this after whom no man enquireth. || Thus saith Yahvé : behold I turn the fortunes of the tents of Yaqob, and take pity upon his dwellings, | so that the city is builded upon its hill and the palace remaineth upon its proper place, || so that from them soundeth thanksgiving and the voice of them that play ; | and I multiply them so that they become not fewer, and honour them so that they become not insignificant, ||  
 20 his sons then become as aforetime, and his community will be established before me ; | and I punish all his tormentors, || and his potentate will be from himself, his ruler proceed from his midst, | and if I command him to approach he will draw near unto me, | (for who is this that pledged his life to draw near unto me ? saith Yahvé), || that ye then become unto me a people, | and I become unto you a God ? ||

## 3.

Behold a storm of Yahvé's, wrath breaketh out, | a storm rolleth up to whirl upon the head of the wicked ; || the hot

sent (comp. *ante* on xlvi. 47, p. 210) will pass away through the divine compassion, so that city and palace again find their proper place and a new, joyous, and prosperous national life is established, vv. 18, 19 ; a restoration will take place when in particular no foreign potentate but a fellow-countryman reigns over the people as their king, that is, the Messiah, who may also with impunity approach the inmost sanctuary and boast of confidential relation with heaven, a freedom which others may presume to take (*e.g.*, Nabukodrossor or his generals at the conquest of the city dared to enter the inmost sanctuary of the Temple), but verily not with impunity before Yahvé ! vv. 20, 21.—אָנִישׁ לְשִׁבְרָהּ, ver. 12, is literally *thy wound hath what is sick*,

comp. Isa. i. 5. The words ver. 13 agree only generally with the figures xli. 11, not as regards the separate members and their construction. The turn in the question ver. 15 is like Mic. iv. 9. The words ver. 16 according to the received reading are *all thy oppressors will all go into captivity* : the last words are like xxii. 22, but are here too weak and commonplace, the repeated *all* being besides deficient in strength. It is better to read, partly following the LXX, כָּלֶם בְּשָׂרָם יִהְיֶה, for כָּלֶם, may correspond to the New Hebrew לֹוִם, and like the Germ. *ganz* simply express a generalising or intensification of the idea of the verb.—Ver. 22 is omitted by the LXX, but it is protected by the context and xxxi. 1.

3. Yes, also in order that the ancient Mosaic blessing with which the previous

strophe, ver. 22, ended may be fulfilled, the storm of Yahvé's which must carry

anger of Yahvé will not abate, until he executeth and until he establisheth the thoughts of his heart: | at the end of the xxxi. days ye will perceive it. || In that time (saith Yahvé) will I  
 1 become a God unto all families of Israel, | and they will become unto me a people. || — Thus saith Yahvé: the people that escaped the sword had found grace in the wilderness, | yea, one went to establish him in quiet, [that is] Israel; | from afar Yahvé appeared unto him, and with everlasting love loved I thee: | on that account I extended kindness unto thee. || I will yet build thee that thou mayest be built, thou virgin Israel, | thou wilt yet put on thy cymbals\* and go in the dance of the players; || thou wilt yet plant vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria, | — the planters plant them and make them common! || for it is a day when watchmen upon the mountains of Ephraim cry: || “arise and let us go up to Ssion, unto Yahvé our God!” ||

off all the unjust must burst, just as it has already been threatened, xxiii. 19, 20, in order that the consummation of that hope may draw near for *all* tribes of Israel (for both kingdoms), vv. 23—xxx. 1. If former times and the early fortunes of this nation are also calmly reviewed in conformity with the thought of Yahvé, the same conclusion is arrived at: formerly in the Arabian desert the nation as it had only just escaped the Egyptian sword found favour nevertheless (after Hos. xi. 1 and similar passages), Yahvé going as it were to found a quiet dwelling-place for this remarkable community; anticipating it Yahvé appeared unto it from afar (in some such way as is described Hab. iii. 3-13), extending to it from afar his helping hand, because he dedicated to it (like the husband to the bride) everlasting love vv. 2, 3. Can all that have been thus founded and commenced in ancient times for nothing? No. The same Yahvé will in the future make this community again to flourish and rejoice, will again make Ssion to

rule over the fruitful mountains of the Northern kingdom, then inhabited by joyous vinedressers that do not labour in vain, vv. 4, 5 (to *profane* the vineyard, *i.e.*, to begin to enjoy it, not to cultivate it during all the first years for nothing, after Lev. xix. 23-25; Deut. xx. 6; xxviii. 30), inasmuch as it is an established truth, that all quarters of the earth, including therefore Samaria, although it was formerly hostile, will of their own accord turn to Ssion, ver. 6 after Isa. ii. 2.—The differences in the readings xxx. 23, 24, from those of xxiii. 19, 20 are unimportant, except that xxiii. 19 instead of מתגורר the more correct reading מתחולל is found. It appears also from the construction xxii. 19 that חלול may have another subject than the previous מציא. Ver. 3, it is necessary to read לי with the LXX instead of לי. The *watchmen* ver. 6 are they whose business it is to observe the moon for the purpose of proclaiming the festivals, comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 460 (386).

\* Germ. *Cymbeln*, though in *Dichter des A.B. Ia*, p. 217, תוף is cited as the usual word for the tambourine, and צלצלים for cymbals.—*Tr.*



## 4.

For thus saith Yahvé : Rejoice for Yaqob with gladness, and shout for the chief of the nations, | praise ye aloud and say, "help Yahvé thy people, the remnant of Israel!" || Behold I bring them from the North country, and gather them from the furthest ends of the earth, | among them blind and lame, she with child and she that bringeth forth together, | in a great community they return hither. || Amid weeping they come, and amid entreaties I conduct them, | I lead them to water brooks, upon a straight way where they do not stumble : | for I have then become unto Israel a father, and Ephráim is my first-born. || — Hear Yahvé's word, ye heathen, and declare it in distant coasts, | and say, "He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd his flock!" || For Yahvé redeemeth Yaqob, | and ransometh him from the hand of the stronger one, || and they come and rejoice upon Ssion's height, and flow to Yahvé's wealth, to the corn and the fruit and the oil, and to the young sheep and oxen, | so that their soul becometh as a watered garden, and they no more languish again. || Then will the virgin be glad in the dance, both youths and old men together, | and I turn their mourning into joy and comfort them, and make them glad from their sorrow; || I satiate the priests' desire with abundance, | and my people have my wealth in fulness (saith Yahvé). ||

4. And already the discourse turns to the heathen, to summon them to rejoice at the redemption of Israel which has been promised by Yahvé as certain, and as also bringing to them too salvation in the end. Let the heathen themselves rejoice over and pray for the prosperity of this first and most important of all nations, ver. 7 (in the manner of ver. 23 and Ps. cxviii. 25) : Yahvé promises His wonderful deliverance, so that even the weak amongst them shall then feel strong, when with true humility and repentance (iii. 21) they return under Yahvé's safe guidance : for the final hope must one day be fulfilled, some time Yahvé must become in reality their Father and

Ephráim which was formerly cast off must become his dearest child (after Ex. iv. 22; Deut. xiv. 1), vv. 8, 9. Praise, ye heathen, Yahvé aloud as the wonderful deliverer, ver. 10: He will conduct his people again to the ancient national joy of a life that is not unduly oppressed by want, vv. 11, 12, so that all the various classes of the people, young and old, priests and others, enjoy through Yahvé a happy life, and thus that which had been promised above, vv. 4, 5, in general terms is fulfilled in detail, vv. 13, 14. The **בִּי** of **בִּירְאֵשׁ**, ver. 7, can interchange with the **לִי** of the previous member in the case of a verb meaning to rejoice, acc. 217 f 2.

## II. 1.

- 15 Thus saith Yahvé: a voice is heard in Rama, sobbing of most bitter weeping: Rachel weepeth over her sons, refuseth to be comforted concerning her son that he is not! || Thus saith Yahvé: Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: | for there is a reward for thy labour (saith Yahvé), and they return home from the enemy's land; || and there is a hope for thy future (saith Yahvé), and the sons return home to their border. || — Heard, heard have I Ephráim bemoaning himself: "thou chastisedst me and I was chastised as an indocile calf; | convert me that I convert myself, since thou art Yahvé my God! || for after that I am converted I am penitent, and after that I am instructed I smite upon the thigh, | I am ashamed yea abashed, that I bear the reproach of my youth."
- 20 || Is then a dear son unto me Ephráim, or is he a favourite child, | that as often as I severely smite him I nevertheless remember him again? | wherefore my feelings are in commotion for him: have mercy have mercy upon him will I! (saith Yahvé). || — Set thee up way-marks, plant thee finger-posts, | direct thine heart towards the highway, the way thou hast gone; | return, virgin Israel, return to these thy cities! || how long wilt thou withdraw thyself, rebellious daughter? | surely Yahvé createth a new thing on the earth: a female turning into a male! ||

1. The second half begins like the first with a picture of the present misery, but it strikes a higher note and confines itself in the first strophe to the Northern kingdom; it is probable that passages of older prophets belonging to this kingdom, that had at that time been long overthrown, were before Yéremyá, and which he reproduced in his own manner. The very commencement is in a lofty tone: the mother of Yoseph (of the chief tribe of the Northern kingdom) is heard, as if she had been frightened from her grave, bitterly wailing upon the high Rama (where Samúel dwelt in the tribe of Ephráim, and from which the grave of Rachel was not far distant, comp. 1 Sam. vii. 17 with x. 2) over her sons,

or rather over her one great son Yoseph (the symbol of the Northern kingdom), that she has lost them! ver. 15: yet, the higher voice immediately replies to her, let her not weep more, this mother that is unweariedly wrestling for the welfare of her children; there is still hope for her and for her sons, vv. 10, 11. The divine hope is that this portion of the nation also will certainly pray some day to Yahvé under the impulse of deep repentance, of that repentance which thereby attests the commencement of a better life that it perceives the true character of the divine chastisements, yea, desires to be led more and more by them to him again in order not longer to bear the shameful punishment of the

2.

Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: yet will this word be said in Yuda's land and its cities, when I turn their fortunes: | "Yahvé bless thee thou pasture of righteousness, thou holy mountain!" || and therein will Yuda dwell with all its cities together, | husbandmen—they journey with the flock: ||  
 25 for I refresh the weary soul, | and every sinking soul I satisfy.||

"Wherefore I awaked and beheld,

and my dream was sweet unto me!" ||

Behold, days come (saith Yahvé)—and I sow the house of Israel and the house of Yuda with seed of man and seed of

former period of immaturity (of its youth); and already Yahvé hears how Ephraim prays to him like a child, vv. 18, 19, and is soon drawn to him, as if surprised by compassion, with more than maternal affection, as if He observed with astonishment that Ephraim must really have been a dearest child since He can never forget him however often He chastises him, ver. 20 (יָדָבֵר like יָדָבָה, 1 Sam. xviii. 7; for יָדָבֵר must here mean to smite, as 2 Chron. xvii. 10 and elsewhere, יָדָבֵר being connected with יָדָבָה; comp. the exactly similar passage xlvi. 27 ante p. 208. And if it is the case with this portion of the nation, that in Yahvé's mind its future pardon has been resolved upon, then the virgin Israel, which has acquired the name of the rebellious daughter (iii. 14, etc.) and has now been long in exile, may confidently look around her for the way of return and

prepare to come back; why does she withdraw and creep away simply from human fearfulness? it is true, a weak woman such as she is may easily entertain fear at the thought of such unusual and apparently difficult undertakings; but Yahvé, for his part, creates now new and wonderful powers, a female changing herself into a male, he strengthens the weak as if a woman transformed herself into a man: in such a case how is there room for fear? On יָדָבֵר comp. the observations § 298 b; the choice of the two words יָדָבָה and יָדָבֵר must be understood as having reference to the sexual relations in the primary sense.—Ver. 21, תַּמְרוֹרִים must signify *elevations*, corresponding to the Arabic *amārah*, waymarks in the desert, really small heaps of stones, from תַּמְרָה=אֶמְרָה to be high, formed acc. § 157a, while תַּמְרוֹר, ver. 15, is formed from מֶרֶר acc. § 161a.

2. But the other half of the nation will be not less fortunate: after the great turn in the affairs of Yuda, the holy city that is now in ruins will again be pronounced happy by all, vv. 23, comp. Ps. cxxix. 8, whilst in the whole land both the inhabitants of the cities and the husbandmen then dwell securely, ver. 24: since the consummation of all happiness described vv. 12-14 must

incontestably arrive some day, ver. 25, so that then that indescribably blessed state arrives which to have seen even only in a dream (as is here the case with the prophet) is perfect bliss (comp. *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* Vol. V. p. 177 sq.), as is said in the well-known song, ver. 26, comp. Ps. xvii. 15, cxxxix. 18 (for ver. 26, the character of which does not suit this connexion, is probably taken

beast, || and as I watched over them to pluck up and tear up, to pull up and to destroy and to injure: | so will I watch over them to build and to plant (saith Yahvé). || In those days it will not be said any more: "Fathers ate sour grapes, and the  
 30 sons' teeth became blunt! || but everyone will die by his own iniquity; | every man that eateth sour grapes his teeth become blunt."

## 3.

Behold, days come (saith Yahvé) | — and I conclude with the house of Israel and with the house of Yuda a new covenant: || not as the covenant which I concluded with their fathers, when I took their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, | which my covenant they broke, although I am their protector (saith Yahvé); || but this is the covenant which I will conclude with the house of Israel after those days (saith Yahvé): | I put my law in their inmost parts, and will write it upon their heart, | and will be to them a God, as they will be

from a well-known song).—And both parts of the ancient community will at last flourish afresh as if a new seed for all living things were scattered over them, ver. 27, comp. xxi. 6, inasmuch as it cannot be otherwise than that, in the same unusual degree in which the Divine hand had been employed hitherto in punishing, had been acting against them as with a watchful eye in the destruction of evil, it is then employed for them for their good and advancement, ver. 28 with reference to the threat at the commencement i. 10-12, which is in this way cancelled at the end of the book. Then will disappear also that faint-hearted prejudice which

now prevails even proverbially in this time of despondency, that the descendants *must* suffer for the sins of their forefathers, as if the true divine order were not rather that guilt is counted and produces its effects as a purely personal thing, vv. 29, 30, comp. further Ez. ch. xviii. The expression *Yuda's land and all its cities* is so familiar to Yéremyá that he says even *this city, i.e., Jerusalem or Yuda, and all her cities*, xix. 15, as in those lands it early became the custom to speak of the capital city instead of the whole land that belonged to it. Similar modes of speaking are not uncommon, as xxxii. 36, 37.

3 And finally to express the truth upon the whole matter by means of the purest conception and the clearest figure: there must and will be some day concluded a new covenant, which is not so perishable as that which has hitherto been in force, the nation having as good as broken the latter although no fault could be attached to Yahvé, inasmuch as he remains always their

protector (לְיָדָי like iii. 14), but an imperishable one because it has been written in their hearts (not merely consigned to books which are now so greatly overestimated) and having root in the feeling and knowledge of people generally, and being then maintained by the national life which will then be thoroughly reformed and delivered from its sins vv. 31-34, comp. xvii. 1, a



to me a people; || so that they no more teach every one the other and each one another saying "know Yahvé!" | but they all of them will know me, from the least unto the greatest (saith Yahvé), since I will forgive their guilt, and remember  
 35 their sin no more. || — Thus saith Yahvé, that appointed the sun for light by day, the ordinances of moon and stars for light by night, | that stirreth the sea that its waves roar, Yahvé of Hosts his name: || if these ordinances shall remove from my face (saith Yahvé), Israel's seed also will cease to be a nation before me for ever! || Thus saith Yahvé: if the heavens are measured upwards, and the earth's foundations are explored downwards, | I also will reject the whole seed of Israel, on account of all that they did (saith Yahvé) ||—Behold days come (saith Yahvé) | —and the city will be built unto Yahvé from the tower Chanan'el unto the corner gate; || and the measuring line goeth forth further straight to the hill Gareb, | and turneth  
 40 towards Gó'ah;\* || and the whole valley with the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the pools unto the Qidron-book, unto the corner of the horse-gate eastwards are holy unto Yahvé, | never again to be plucked up nor thrown down. ||

sentence of greatest importance and finely uttered; comp. later "Isa." liv. 13.—But if it seems that too much has been promised by ver. 34, that Yahvé by means of his marvellous power of purifying grace will destroy even all the ancient sins that have become so habitual in this community and will thereby establish the possibility of a new and still higher life, let the following be listened to: as certainly as Yahvé maintains the eternal laws of all creation, will he not suffer Israel, *i.e.*, the basis and commencement of his true community, to perish (because this is only a second, a higher, creation, that must have equally firm laws and the same succession as the material creation): and just as little as the material universe can be completely

measured by men and known by them as perfectly as by the Creator, will he reject this foundation of the true community notwithstanding all the doubts that arise from the past transgressions of the nation, vv. 35-37, ver. 35 after Amos ix. 5, 6, comp. also much that is similar above, x. 2.—And finally to say the thing to which the aspiration of the people must in the last instance be most strongly directed, even the holy city that now lies in ruins will again be built in its whole extent to the praise of Yahvé and become highly honoured, never again to fall as is now the case, vv. 38-40. The description of the extent of the new city is for us somewhat obscure, as are all the similar ones of the Old Testament: but it is clear that it does not proceed from one

\* The Authorised Version overlooks the effect of the  $\overline{\text{TT}}$  local in restoring the original feminine ending *-at*, and transcribes the name *Goth*.—Tr.

point to trace in a direct course the boundaries of the city, but begins afresh three times, simply with the view of mentioning the most important places on the confines. If therefore the first of these three lines, that from the tower Chanan'el east of the temples to the corner gate on the west of it ("Zech." xiv. 10), takes in the most central part of the city, the third, that from the valley with the corpses and the ashes on the south-west (where elsewhere the valley and the dung gate are mentioned Neh. ii. 13 sq.; iii.

13, 14; xii. 31) to all the pools (acc. to the *K'tháb* שְׂרָמוֹת comp. זָרַם *to flow*; at least the Targ. explains the word thus) on the south to the Qidron and the horse-gate on the south-east, takes in the southern portion of the city, it is probable that the second which mentions Gareb and Gó'ah, places which as it happens do not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament, is intended to include the most northern part of the city, or the new quarter called afterwards Bezetha. As regards Gareb comp. *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, V. 575, 3rd ed.

## 2. *The hope described in symbols and figures.*

### Ch. XXXII, XXXIII.

But the signs or figures that Yéremyá is in the habit of supplying after his exposition of the pure and simple expectation, form in this instance a separate piece, for the reason that a long narrative has to be introduced at this point.

During the last siege of Jerusalem, when Yéremyá lay in prison according to the royal command, a cousin from 'Anathoth came to him, to offer him the purchase of a field to which he possessed the right of inheritance and redemption, xxxii. 7, 8. This cousin, like Yéremyá, of priestly origin, and evidently advanced in years like Yéremyá, who was the son of his uncle, had therefore no children, so that his heritage would some time have passed to Yéremyá, while if he had sold this field, which must have been freehold, before his death to some one else, Yéremyá would have had at least the right of redemption, *i.e.*, of repurchasing it, Lev. xxv. 25: so that it necessarily appeared to him as simply his first duty, if he desired to sell this field, to sell it to the next relative.\* What induced the

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\* Comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, pp. 407, 497 (353, 420). It is only necessary to add that the ancient *allmanden* (commons) had been certainly divided in these later times and so made into fields.

cousin to sell is not said: the unquiet times supply a general motive; and the low price that is paid for the field, ver. 9, appears as a confirmation of the conclusion that the possession of all such fields was deemed very insecure. Neither is it very difficult, when the general insecurity of property at that time is remembered, to understand how an anticipation that this cousin would come to him with such an offer could at some earlier time have passed through the prophet's mind, vv. 6-8.

And in reality, according to the ordinary view of things, *Yéremyá* would have done well at this uncertain time, and while he lay in prison too, to decline an offer from which he could gain no tangible advantage; any man without higher hope and good courage, especially in this desperate condition of the kingdom, would have declined it, even if he had not foreseen as clearly as *Yéremyá* the necessary ruin of the city and the kingdom. But not so the true prophet, who though feeling the full certainty of the destruction awaiting the immediate future does not give up the eternal hope. When, therefore, such an offer was now presented to him as a temptation, by declining it he would only have added to his own feeling of hopelessness as well as increased that of many others who looked up to him. But he was too full of believing hope, and under its influence did not hesitate for a moment to buy formally and publicly the field, and to place in safe keeping the documents relating to the purchase as if for use in future, though it might be distant, times; it was as if a higher power suddenly compelled him by this act to attest as by a manifest sign before all the world the unshaken confidence which he reposed in the eternal hopes. But as he subsequently reflected quietly and more deeply on this matter which had thus suddenly come upon him and had been as quickly carried out, and wrestled in believing prayer in order to bring to light its full divine meaning, higher communications and symbols and certainties flowed in upon him concerning this matter and the

eternal hopes connected with it, and he was able to proclaim the Messianic hope with still greater enthusiasm than before, even in the midst of these depressing surroundings of the prison and notwithstanding the certainty of the destruction of the city and the kingdom, which was constantly present to his mind and was in reality approaching ever nearer.

Accordingly he describes here as a further confirmation of the Messianic hopes that are pictured in the foregoing piece, what manifold and cheering revelations he received by means of the above circumstances, and with what signs and symbols those hopes may be as it were sealed. After the historical elucidation, xxxii. 2-25, the first discourse supplies in two strophes the divine exposition and application of the symbol, xxxii. 26-44, a second discourse, likewise in two strophes, heightens and increases the certainty that with the present destruction of the city it is not the end of the true community that must come, but the time of its perfection is certainly drawing near, xxxiii. 1-18, till in the end two shorter discourses add some of the most powerful divine assurances and symbols, xxxiii. 19-26. It is not very foreign to the connexion that at the end, xxxiii. 17, 18, reference is made to the restoration of the tribe of Levi; for although Yéremyá never elsewhere gives prominence to this particular, in this case the meaning of the symbol at the commencement suggested a return of the thought to it at the end. Nor is it so rare a thing with him elsewhere to mention the priests (and what was more natural to him a priest by birth?), unfavourably generally, it is true, but still favourably also, comp. xxxi. 14, with xxxiii. 13.

Though the first two sections and accordingly by far the largest portion of this piece belong by their subject-matter to the time of the final publication of the book, the last two short oracles, xxxiii. 19-26, are repeated from the earlier edition like ch. xxx.-xxxi., being somewhat more firmly attached to the later pieces by a small transitional sentence, xxxiii. 17. They



may formerly have stood at the end of the discourse ch. xxxi., and are very closely connected by their words, figures, and thoughts with xxxi. 35, 36; the words vv. 19, 23, is all that may have been added in the last edition. The reference to the two kingdoms occurs here also, ver. 24, and the use of the word מִשְׁפָּחָה is one of Yéremyá's most genuine peculiarities. Nothing is more perverse and baseless than to suppose that we have in this passage, xxxiii. 19-26, or generally in ch. xxx.-xxxiii., additions by a later prophet. When the priests are called *Priests-Levites* or *Levites-Priests* (which is the same thing) xxxiii. 18, 21, this is only done after the manner of Deuteronomy, and only because importance is attached in this particular passage to the regular priests according to the ancient and sacred order; it is with them as with David. Yéremyá never maintains that the pedigree of the priests is immaterial in Israel.

xxxii.

- 1 The word which came unto Yéremyá from Yahvé in the tenth year of Ssedeqia King of Yuda, which is the eighteenth year of Nabukodrossor. And then the army of the King of Babel laid siege to Yerusalem and the prophet Yéremyá was shut up in the court of the keep of the house of the King of Yuda, where Ssedeqia King of Yuda had shut him up saying: Why prophesiest thou thus: thus saith Yahvé: Behold I give this city into the hand of the King of Babel that he may take it; || and Ssedeqia King of Yuda will not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, but be given into the hand of the King of Babel, | his mouth will speak with the
- 5 mouth of him, and his eyes will see the eyes of him; || and to Babel will he lead Ssedeqia, and there will he be till I visit him (saith Yahvé): | when ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye will not prosper! || But unto Yéremyá had the word of Yahvé come thus: "behold Chanamel the son of thine uncle Shallûm will come to thee saying: buy thou my field in 'Anathôth! for thou hast the right of redemption to buy it." And so Chanamel my uncle's son came to me according to the word of Yahvé in the court of the prison and said to me: "buy now my field

- in 'Anathôth which is in the tribe of Benjamin! for thou hast the right of inheritance and hast the redemption, buy thou it!" Then I knew that it was the word of Yahvé, and I bought the field of Chanamel my uncle's son in 'Anathôth, and weighed him as the money seven pounds and ten in  
 10 silver. || I wrote it in the book sealed it and took witnesses, weighed the money in scales, took the writing of the purchase, that which was sealed according to the law and the statute, and that which was open, I gave then the writing of the purchase to Barûkh the son of Neriya the son of Makhseya before the eyes of my cousin Chanamel and before the eyes of the witnesses who had subscribed the writing of the purchase, before the eyes of all the Jews who were placed in the court of the prison, and I charged Barûkh before their eyes as follows: Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts the God of Israel: Take these writings, this writing of the purchase both the sealed one and this open writing, and put them in an earthen pot, that they  
 15 may remain in it many years; for thus saith Yahvé of Hosts the God of Israel: yet again shall houses and fields and vineyards be bought in this land!—Then I prayed to Yahve, after I had given the writing of the purchase to Barûkh the son of Neriya saying: O Lord Yahvé! behold thou hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power and thy outstretched arm, | nothing is too wonderful for thee || thou who showest kindness to thousands, and repayest the guilt of fathers into the bosom of their sons after them, | thou great Hero-God Yahvé of Hosts thy name; || thou of great counsel and of lofty deed, | whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give to each according to his ways and according to  
 20 the fruit of his deeds; || thou who didst signs and wonders, in the land of Egypt and until this day, both in Israel and among men, | and so madest thee a name at this day; || and leddest thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and with wonders, | with strong hand and with outstretched arm and with great terror, || and gavest them this land which thou hadst sworn to their fathers to give them, | a land flowing with milk and honey: || and they came and inherited it—but hearkened not to thy voice and walked not in thy laws, | nothing of all thou commandest did they do—and therefore thou causedst all this evil to come upon them. || Behold the ramparts are come to the city to take it, and the city is given into the hands of

the Chaldæans that lay siege against it by the sword and the famine and the pestilence, | and that which thou spakest is  
 25 come to pass : || but though thou seest this yet thou saidst to me Lord Yahvé : “buy the field for money and take witnesses !” | and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldæans ? ||—Then came Yahvé’s word unto Yéremyá as follows :

The oracle announced ver. 1 is not given before ver. 27 ; all that is said in the interval is only a preparation for it. The oracle concerning the king which is only incidentally mentioned vv. 3-5, is narrated by Yéremyá in detail xxxiv. 1-7. Ver. 6 the LXX have the more intelligible reading : וְאֵל יִרְמְיָהוּ הָיָה לֵאמֹר, whilst with the Massôretic reading it is impossible to understand to whom Yéremyá said this : we must otherwise suppose that in the text of the LXX as well as in the present Massôretic text the names of Yéremyá’s fellow-prisoners had been omitted after וַיֹּאמֶר יִרְמְיָהוּ to whom he had narrated his anticipation and that the LXX had altered the text, which had thus become unintelligible to them, in the best way they could ; which is certainly a conceivable but hardly probable supposition, since such a passing expectation as this would hardly be thus publicly communicated by a prophet, especially of Yéremyá’s eminence, and the whole character of the narrative in other respects does not lead to the supposition that Yéremyá had previously communicated it to others.

According to the very clear description, vv. 10, 11, compared with ver. 14, Isa. xlv. 5, two closely connected documents of the sale had to be prepared in accordance with legal usage : the one sealed, i.e., rolled up and then sealed, which might contain the conditions of the sale, and the other open, with the signature of the witnesses, as the wrapper of the former ; both

were laid for better preservation in a dry earthen vessel, ver. 14, comp. *Papyri græci Musei Turin. Egyptii ed. ab Am. Peyron*, in the *Memoirie della R. Acad. di Torino*, vol. xxxi. 1826 ; the preparation of two copies of the same document one of which was to have public authority, was quite a different thing, see *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 241 sq. (207), comp. *Ausland*, 1857, p. 610. With regard to the accusative הַמִּצְוָה וְהַחֲקִים, ver. 11, see § 279b ; on יְ—י, ver. 14, and likewise ver. 20, see § 359.

As the question here is, whether the marvel is possible in the sight of God that a field purchased at this time should really constitute an undisturbed possession, the prayer begins forthwith, ver. 17, with the early utterance Gen. xviii. 14 and gives prominence accordingly, in the further appeal to Yahvé, especially to His miraculous power which must be everywhere as great to day as in the ancient times, whilst it is only the nation that has sinned against His marvellous grace, vv. 18-23 ; but the immediate object of the prayer follows in a few words at the end, vv. 24, 25. Ver. 20 the accents can be made correct only by reading here as ver. 31 וְעַד instead of the simple עַד : then the wonders are meant as they were performed both in ancient times and also as they continue to be performed unto the present time, and in Israel as amongst ordinary men (אֲדָם as Job xxxi. 33) —Ver. 24 the last words ought not to be disconnected from the following verse : they belong

to the next verse because they only give prominence to the apparent contradiction that God has so said contrary to all outward appearance, inas-

much as the city is already as good as surrendered. Besides, they would supply no good meaning connected with ver. 24.

## I. 1.

Behold I am Yahvé, the God of all flesh: | can anything be too wonderful for me? || —Therefore thus saith Yahvé: Behold I give this city into the hand of the Chaldæans and into the hand of Nabukodrossor King of Babel that he take it, || and the Chaldæans which fight against this city come, and kindle this city with fire and burn it, | with the houses on the roofs of which they burned incense to Báal | and brought  
 30 drink-offerings to other gods to provoke me—|| because the sons of Israel and the sons of Yuda have done only that which is evil before me from their youth; | because the sons of Israel only provoked me continually with the work of their hands, saith Yahvé; || because for my indignation and for my wrath was this city unto me, from the day when it was built to this day, in order to remove it far from my face || because of all the wickedness of the sons of Israel and of the sons of Yuda which they did to provoke me, | they their kings princes priests and prophets, both the man of Yuda and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, || and they turned to me the back not the face, | one zealously instructed them continually, but they hearkened not to receive instruction, || but placed their abominations in  
 35 the house over which my name is called, to defile it, || and built the Báal's heights which are in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass before the Mólokh, | which I have neither commanded, nor hath it come into my mind, to practise this abomination—to lead Yuda to sin! |

1. The answer, although it at once assumes a favourable form as is required, ver. 27, comp. ver. 17, must nevertheless at first confirm what has been already so often threatened in the distance and what could at that time be easily foreseen as certain to happen, that the city cannot be delivered in the immediate future; the causes of its overthrow are then pointed out, briefly

but very animatedly, in conformity with the representations of earlier pieces, by a threefold emphatic *because*; twice ver. 30, where the transgressions of both kingdoms are called to mind (though it is better to add *all* for the sake of clearness in the second member), then vv. 31-35, where it is urged with special reference to Jerusalem and Yuda, that the worst transgressions had



## 2.

But now—thus saith Yahve therefore Israel's God of this city, of which ye are thinking that it is given into the hand of the King of Babel by the sword by famine and by pestilence: || Behold I gather them out of all the lands whither I have driven them in my indignation and wrath and in great displeasure, | and bring them back unto this place and cause them to dwell safely, || that they become to me a people, | and I be to them God! || For I give to them one heart and one way: to fear me evermore, | that it may go well with them and with their sons after them; || I conclude with them an eternal covenant, that I will never turn away from them, that I may do them good; | and my fear I put in their heart, that they may not depart from me; || and I rejoice over them to do them good, and plant them in this land | in faithfulness with my whole heart and my whole soul. || —For thus saith Yahvé: as I brought upon this people all this great evil, | so I bring upon them all the good which I speak concerning them; || and the field will be bought in this land | whereof ye are thinking it is a wilderness without any man or beast, given into the hand

been committed by all classes of the people in spite of all admonitions to the contrary. When it is said that Jerusalem became from its very foundation a divine *anger*, *i.e.*, provoked it (comp. lii. 3; 2 Kings xxiv. 20), this can only be taken in a general way, as by the time of Solomon there had certainly not been wanting grounds of provocation. In the case of the first *inf. abs.* לִמְדָּה, ver. 33, it is remarkable that,

as in the numerous similar *inf. abs. ver.* 44, while this construction is carried on in rapid discourse by means of the simple conjunction *and*, acc. § 351 *c*, the person also is changed: but it is manifest that the antithesis that is implied in the whole connexion of the clauses produces its effect here also, acc. § 328 *a*. Vv. 34, 35 like vii. 30, 31; as to ver. 35 comp. the remarks on Ez. xxiii. 37.

2. But to give full expression at last to the favourable prospects which began to be indicated at the beginning of the previous strophe vv. 27, 28 *a*, although men's thoughts may not get beyond these immediate and certain prospects (vv. 36, 43, xxxiii. 10), it is impossible that the absolute thoughts of God that take in all things should not go further: on the contrary, precisely because this destruction of the true com-

munity cannot be conceived to be final, the higher divine grace must then manifest its marvellous efficacy in healing and restoring when men deem everything finally lost; which is here described at first, vv. 36-41, in general terms in beautiful language very similar to that employed above ch. xxx, xxxi, but then, vv. 42-44, the special case from which the discourse started is so referred to that it is said, in all other

of the Chaldæans: || fields will be bought with ready money, written in the book and sealed and witnesses taken | in the land of Benjamin and round about Jerusalem and in the cities of Yuda, | both in the cities of the hills and in those of the plain and in those of the South: | for I turn your fortunes! saith Yahvé. ||

parts of Yuda also active trade will in that better future be carried on with the fields industriously and gladly cultivated. As in **לְהַשִּׁיבֵי אֶתֶם**, ver. 40, the pronoun of the first person receives such prominence, the whole verse must contain a second explanation of the nature of this eternal

covenant only for the sake of poetical variety. The parts of the kingdom, ver. 44, just as xxxiii. 13, xvii. 26, comp. Zech. vii. 7: the second large member supplies only the three main classes of the cities of Yuda that had been just named.

## II. 1.

xxxiii.

- 1 And the word of Yahvé came to Yéremyá a second time, whilst he was still shut up in the court of the prison, saying: Thus said Yahvé who performeth it, | Yahvé who createth it unto truth, Yahvé his name! || (call unto me that I may hear thee, | that I may announce to thee great things, and secret things which thou knowest not!) || yea thus saith Yahvé the God of Israel concerning the houses of this city | and concerning those of the kings of Yuda, || which are torn down towards the ramparts and towards the artillery | in order to fight with the Chaldæans, and to make up their number the dead bodies of those men | whom I smote in my indignation and wrath, and for all the wickedness of whom I hid my face from this city: || Behold I put on a plaster for it,\* and a

1. The fresh opening takes up again substantially the thought of the city, xxxii. 36, 37, but as it is intended now that everything shall be uttered with greater solemnity and definiteness, it is declared emphatically at the very commencement, ver. 2, that He who is here speaking also performs what He says and promises, and works in such a way

that he makes it truth (§ 337 b), He the inexhaustible source of all wisdom and prophecy, who reveals to those who know how to find their way to Him the greatest secrets and such as are wholly inaccessible to others, ver. 3. It is true the houses and palaces of Jerusalem are thrown down in the direction of the trenches and artillery, with which the

\* The 2nd ed. reads *dir*, while the 1st follows the Heb. **לִפְתָּח**. No doubt, *dir* is a misprint.—*Tr.*

remedy and heal them, | and I open to them an abundance of prosperity and peace, || I turn again the fortunes of Yuda and the fortunes of Israel, | and restore them as before time, || I purify them from all their iniquity wherein they sinned against me, | and pardon all their iniquities wherein they sinned against me and wherein they transgressed against me; || that she [the city] may be to me for a joyful name, for praise and for renown before all the nations of the earth, | which when they hear all the good that I do to her, will shake and tremble | for all the good and for all the prosperity I will show her. ||

## 2.

Thus saith Yahvé: Yet again will be heard in this place whereof ye think that it is desolate without men and without cattle, | in the cities of Yuda and in the streets of Jerusalem, which are wasted without men and without inhabitants and

enemy lays siege to the city, by the infatuated inhabitants themselves who wished thus to keep off the besiegers and to obtain open space for attack, but who really thereby only made the number of corpses full of the men whom the divine punishment had resolved to smite, vv. 4, 5. But certain as it may be that the city will now be lost, it will nevertheless be restored again at some time so gloriously by the reconciliation and purification of the nation that the heathen voluntarily flock to it as to the most marvellous visible manifestation of Yahvé's glory, vv. 6-9. Instead of **בצרות**, ver. 3, which in its usual

sense supplies no meaning here, it is better to read **בצרות**, which is found Isa. xlviii. 6. Instead of the unintelligible **החרב באים** (which the accentuation has separated into the two verses 4-5), **החרבים** (for this ending is in any case possible, acc. § 177 c; the form **חרבות** is not found in Yéremyá) must be read, the plur. of **חרב** signifying the heavy siege engines, Ez. xxvi. 9; the LXX. appear to have had this reading. The anticipation of the pronoun in **למלאם** is a genuine peculiarity of Yéremyá, see p. 66, **מלא** to complete the number of. Ver. 6 like viii. 22; xlv. 11; xxx. 13, 17.

2. The previous threats will then be changed into their opposite: vv. 10, 11, the opposite of xxv. 10, comp. xvii. 26; vv. 12, 13, the opposite of vii. 20; xxiv. 6; xxxvi. 29, comp. i. 3, li. 62, and it appears further, particularly from xxxi. 27, that we must without doubt understand the illustration borrowed from cattle in the primary sense, these illus-

trations being here so frequent on account of the great picture of ch. xxxii.; at the same time, it must be remembered that this abundance of cattle was only one result of the greater prosperity in general, and that Yéremyá employed the illustration only because the keeping of cattle was at that time still one of the chief occupations in Israel. The

without cattle || the sound of gladness and of joy, the sound of the bridegroom and of the bride, | the sound of people singing :

thank Yahvé of Hosts, because Yahvé is good,  
because for ever is his kindness !

bringing thanks to the house of Yahvé : | for I restore the land again as before time ! saith Yahvé. || Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts : Yet again in this desolate place without any men or even cattle, and in all its cities | will be a pasture of shepherds who lead their sheep to rest ; || in the cities of the mountain and in those of the plain, and in those of the South, | and in the land of Benjamin and round about Jerusalem and in the cities of Yuda | will the sheep yet pass before him that telleth them, saith Yahvé. || — Behold, days are coming (saith 15 Yahvé) | —when I execute the good word which I have spoken of the house of Israel and of that of Yuda ; || in those days and at that time will I cause to shoot out from David a shoot of righteousness, that he may do equity and righteousness in the land ; || in those days Yuda will be saved, and Jerusalem stand secure, | and thus it will be called *Yahvé-is-our-right*. || — For thus saith Yahvé : unto David will never be wanting a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel, | and unto the priests-Levites will never be wanting a man before me | to bring burnt offerings and cense gifts and present sacrifices continually ! ||

fact that the *counter* of the cattle is mentioned with some significance, ver. 13, points to the Levitical tithes as well known, comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 397 sq. (344 sq.). The poetical words, ver. 11, refer to a hymn of praise that had long been much used in the Temple, traces of which are also found in older Psalms, comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes* I b, pp. 175, 397.—Still higher stands at last the peculiarly *good* word, the word concerning the Messiah, who is called the “Shoot of Righteousness,”

and the new reformed Jerusalem, which bears the name “Yahvé is our Right,” vv. 14-16, like xxiii. 5, 6, as also the similar utterances, that the true theocracy in its twofold aspect, the secular and the spiritual, shall never entirely and for ever perish, vv. 17, 18, which is expressed in the form that was then most natural, comp. xvii. 26, and for the form of speech of vv. 17, 18, comp. xxxi. 36 ; xxxv. 19. The new name of the city, ver. 16, is imitated as early as Ez. xlviii. 35.

### III. 1.

20 And the word of Yahvé came to Yéremyá saying : Thus saith Yahvé : if ye break the covenant of the day and the



covenant of the night | and that day and night be no more in their time ; || then will also my covenant be broken with my servant Davíd, that he have no son who may reign on his throne, | and with the Levites the priests my servants ! || As the host of heaven is not numbered, and the sand of the sea is not measured : | so will I multiply the seed of my servant Davíd, and the Levites who serve me. ||

## 2.

25 And the word of Yahvé came to Yéremyá saying : Sawest thou not what these people say ? namely : “ the two families which Yahvé chose—them he rejected : | and my people will men despise | to be no more a nation before him ! ” || —Thus saith Yahvé : if I have not given the covenant of the light and of the night, | if I have not given the laws of heaven and earth, || I will also reject the seed of Yaqob and of my servant Davíd, not taking from his seed rulers over the seed of Abraham Isaak and Yaqob ! | but I turn again their fortunes and have mercy upon them.

But it was just that last promise, vv. 17, 18, which seemed so incredible at that time when the great calamities of the kingdom must necessarily fall particularly upon the reigning royal family and the ruling tribe of priests, that might require a special confirmation ; and this is given twice at the close in the loftiest figures that the conceptions of the prophets could grasp.—1. As firm as the covenant of day and night, which Yahvé had concluded as it were with them that they should always appear at the right time, comp. Gen. viii. 22 sq., so surely can Yahvé maintain the covenant here declared with the theocracy, which is founded in a certain sense upon Gen. xv. 5 ; xxii. 17, vv. 20-22. With regard to בְּרִיתִי, vv. 20, 25, see § 211b ; in the second member of ver. 25 in a word, which is of substantially the same meaning as this, the suff. of the first person is dispensed with, comp. xxxi.

15, 16.—2. And as regards the despair of many at this time, who believe that Yahvé, inasmuch as He permits the two kingdoms to perish, will despise and suffer to perish the remaining families of the nation (*e.g.*, the royal and the priestly families) as too insignificant, ver. 24, Yahvé solemnly declares that He will just as little reject them as it is certain that He has determined the great eternal laws of the universe and ordinances of nature, vv. 25, 26. In יִנְאֲשׁוּן and לַפְנֵיהֶם depending upon it, ver. 24, we have an indefinite veiled way of speaking, in order to speak of Yahvé, whom those in despair really mean, with somewhat less irreverence ; the meaning of the words and the speaker of them are both made clear only from the exactly corresponding passage xxxi. 36, and the words seem as if they had been transferred with the entire passage vv. 20 sq. from that place.

THREE HISTORICAL SUPPLEMENTS AS TO THE LABOURS OF THE  
PROPHET IN THE LAST PERIOD.

Ch. XXXIV., XXXV.

1.—*The Oracle to Ssedeqia.*

XXXIV. 1-7.

As the oracle, xxxii. 3, 4, which was only very briefly quoted above, was both sufficiently important in itself and confirmed by the subsequent event, Yéremyá produced it here in the first historical supplement in the form in which it was originally addressed to him. For though he proclaimed to the king directly the destruction of the city and his captivity, he did not announce his violent death: and as a fact, when Nabukodrossor subsequently passed judgment upon the captive king, he found the weak monarch, who had been driven to rebellion more by his advisers than by his own intentions, at least not deserving of capital punishment, xxxviii. 23; xxxix. 5-7; lii. 9-11; 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7. This served at the same time as a limitation as regards the king of what had been said in too general terms xxi. 7; and also as an explanation of what was meant by the expression that God would "visit" him in Babel, xxxii. 5: an honourable burial of one who had fallen so low is of itself a sign that God would not wholly forget him, but graciously look upon him.

xxxiv.

- 1 The word that came to Yéremyá from Yahvé: whilst Nabukodrossor the king of Babel and all his army and all kingdoms of the dominion of his hand and all the nations fought against Jerusalem and against all its cities, as follows: Thus said Yahvé Israel's God: Go to Ssedeqia the king of Yuda and say unto him: thus saith Yahvé: behold I give this city into the hand of the king of Babel, that he may burn it with fire; || but thou wilt not escape from his hand, but wilt surely be taken and given into his hand, | thine eyes will see

5 those of the king of Babel, his mouth speak with thy mouth | and thou go unto Babel. || Only hear Yahvé's word, thou king of Yuda! | thus saith Yahvé concerning thee: thou wilt not die by the sword: || in peace wilt thou die, and after the burial of thy fathers the former kings that were before thee | so will they bury thee, and "Alas Lord!" bewail thee! | for a word have I spoken, saith Yahvé. || —And the prophet Yéremyá spake to Ssedeqia the king of Yuda all these words in Jerusalem, while the army of the king of Babel fought against Jerusalem and all the remaining cities of Yuda, against Lahkish and against 'Azeqa because these of Yuda's cities remained as defenced cities.

Ver. 2 the first **וְאָמַרְתָּ** must be omitted, according to the LXX, and the accents altered in consequence.—The expression ver. 5 by no means indicates that the king will be again raised to his throne and receive in Jerusalem a splendid burial, but only forms the antithesis to ver. 4: for if he should then be only spared by Nabukodrossor, it might be foreseen that in later years he might die in peace and be buried in

honour by the Jews resident at Babel according to ancient custom, comp. further lii. 11; also 2 Kings xxii. 20 with xxiii. 30. With regard to the kind of burial here intended see *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 205 (176).—It may be seen from ver. 7 that at that time of cities of note there were only these two strong fortresses besides Jerusalem that remained untaken; **נָחַל** interchanges elsewhere with **עַל** in Yéremyá's writings.

## 2.—Concerning slavery.

### Ch. xxxiv. 8-22.

A very remarkable oracle historically considered. According to Exod. xxi. 2-11; Deut. xv. 12-18, a slave of pure Hebrew blood could never be held in servitude seven full years, but must be emancipated in the seventh year: a law which had in those centuries long been in abeyance, comp. *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. i., p. 411 sq., and *Antiquities of Israel*, pp. 283-286 (245-248). Now, at this time the king and the nation were brought, partly by the conscience of the people which had been aroused by Deuteronomy and partly by the calamities of the time, to the common reso-

lution to observe this law again ; but it could be observed in Jerusalem only, since the Chaldeans had already surrounded the city. And as a fact good fortune seemed immediately to follow the noble resolve : the Chaldeans, threatened by the Egyptians coming from Africa, raised the siege, ver. 21 ; xxxvii. 5. But when the people became unfaithful to the law again, which they had already observed under most solemn promises, as soon as this immediate danger had passed over (we do not know under what pretext), the prophet's just indignation was kindled against such faithlessness, and he threatened (what very soon happened) the return of the Chaldeans to the siege and overthrow of the city. This discourse is comprised in one strophe, vv. 13-22.

The word that came to Yéremyá from Yahvé, after the king Ssedeqia had concluded a covenant with all the people of Jerusalem to declare for themselves freedom, for every man to let his man-slave and every man his woman-slave, Hebrew or Hebrewess, go free, that none of them any more hold another

10 Yudean as a slave :—and at that time all the princes and the whole people who had entered into the covenant to set free every man his man-slave and every man his woman-slave, no more to hold them as slaves : they obeyed and set them free, but afterwards they brought back again the man-slaves and woman-slaves whom they had let go free and by force made them man-slaves and woman-slaves,—and then the word of Yahvé came unto Yéremyá as follows :

Thus saith Yahvé Israel's God : | I concluded a covenant with your fathers, when I led them forth from Egypt from the house of bondmen, saying : || “after every seven years shall ye every man let go his Hebrew brother who hath been sold unto thee, that he may serve thee six years and then thou lettest him free from thee !” but your fathers hearkened not unto me, and

15 inclined not their ear. || But turning yourselves ye did just now what is right in my sight, one declaring to the other freedom, | and ye concluded a covenant before me in the house over which my name is called. || But again turning yourselves ye desecrated my name and brought back every one his man-slave



and every one his woman-slave whom ye had personally set free | and forced them to be man-slaves and woman-slaves unto you. || Therefore thus saith Yahvé: Ye have not hearkened unto me to declare freedom one to the other and among each other: | behold I declare freedom unto you (saith Yahvé) | for the sword for the pestilence and for the famine, and make you a playball for all kingdoms of the earth; || I give the men that transgressed my covenant, that kept not the words of the covenant that was struck before me, | of the calf which they struck in two and passed between its parts, || the princes of Yuda and the princes of Jerusalem, the courtiers and the priests and the whole people of the land, | that passed  
 20 between the pieces of the calf || —I give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of their deadly foes, | that their dead bodies become meat for the birds of heaven and for the beasts of the earth; || and Ssedeqia the king of Yuda and his princes I give into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of his mortal foes, | and into the hand of the forces of the king of Babel that have marched from you. || Behold I command (saith Yahvé)—and bring them again to this city, that they fight against it and take it and burn it with fire, | and the cities of Yuda I lay waste without an inhabitant. ||

It appears from the same phrase, vv. 15, 17, that לָחֵם, ver. 8, is to be taken as reflexive. *After seven years*, ver. 14, namely, as is immediately more particularly explained, so that the manumission must follow with the expiration of the sixth year according to the order of the public succession of years. The force of the threat depends primarily upon a play of thought founded upon the matter itself: since they will not notify and declare to each other mutually their own freedom, Yahvé will on his part declare to them freedom—that is, dismiss them from his house and protection in order that they may become

the prey of the three principal calamities, ver. 17. The discourse then refers with greater solemnity to the customary awful passage in the case of covenant sacrifices between the pieces of the covenant-animal, of the calf, vv. 18, 19, comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 91 sq. (78); and inasmuch as עֶגֶל is here used as equal to בְּרִית as in explanation of an older word, we may see therefore that בְּרִית signifies properly *food*, then *sacrificial food* and the sacrificial animal to be cut up (כֶּרֶת), finally like σπονδή the covenant concluded by means of such a sacrifice.

3.—*The Rekhabites.*

Ch. XXXV.

This piece refers to a much earlier period. When the Chaldeans overran Yuda for the first time, the Rekhabites, a small nomadic tribe who dwelt on the desert boundaries of Yuda, fled into the fortified capital for the sake of safety. This strange tribe derived its origin through Rekhav from Yuda, 1 Chron. ii. 55, but appears to have habituated itself, after the example of the ancient Qaenites, to the earlier life in tents, and must some centuries before the time of Yéremyá have received through a certain Yonadab, who is mentioned as an important man, 2 Kings x. 15, 23, a somewhat stable constitution based upon their preference for the nomadic life, by which means it became fully hardened into a tent and desert people, and considered itself specially bound scrupulously to avoid wine, the symbol of more luxurious and settled life: a more stable development of the peculiar desert life which is met with later also amongst Arab tribes, Diod. xix. 94, and reached down to the times of Islam; comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 79 (III. 543 sq.). It is conceivable that these singular men, whose fragile tents could render them but little protection against the war of those times, should attract much attention when they appeared in Jerusalem: and the spirit urged Yéremyá to attempt a public trial of their faithfulness to their peculiar laws. But when it appeared with what vigour they were able to resist the temptation to drink wine, he could not refrain from contrasting the faithfulness of this petty nation in following merely an earthly father's severe commands, with the unfaithfulness of Israel to the commands of its purely spiritual God, nor therefore from repeating the threats against Yuda, vv. 13-17, and pronouncing his prophetic blessing upon the Rekhabites for such self-denying steadfastness, vv. 18, 19. In fact, these Rekhabites appear here at the end of the book of the prophet, before whose divine vision none of the chief

sections of the people of that time can find favour, almost like that widow before Christ (see *Geschichte Christus*, p. 522, 3rd ed.): in this dispersed and despised fragment of the community of true religion alone is there to be found any longer faithfulness and hope!

xxxv.

- 1 The word which came to Yéremyá from Yahvé in the days of Yoyaqim son of Yosia king of Yuda as follows: Go unto the house of the Rekhabites, and speak with them and bring them to the house of Yahve into one of the chambers and give them wine to drink!—So I took Yazanya son of Yéremyá son of Chabassinya with his brethren and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rekhabites, brought them to the house of Yahvé into the chamber of the sons of Chanan son of Yigdalyahu the man of God, beside the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Ma'seya son of Shallûm keeper of the threshold,—
- 5 placed before the sons of the house of the Rekhabites jugs full of wine and cups and said unto them "Drink ye wine!"—Then said they: we drink no wine, because Yonadab son of Rekhab our father laid upon us the following command: 'Ye shall drink no wine, ye and your sons for ever; and build no house nor sow seed nor plant or possess a vineyard; but in tents shall ye dwell all your days, in order that ye may live many days upon the face of the ground where ye sojourn!' And we hearkened unto the voice of Yonadab son of Rekhab our father regarding all that he commanded us, not to drink
- 10 wine all our days we our wives our sons and daughters, nor to build houses for our habitation, nor to possess vineyards and field and seed, and dwelt in our tents; we heard and did according to all that our father Yonadab commanded us. But when Nabukodrossor king of Babel marched through the land, then we said 'come and let us go to Jerusalem, from before the army of the Chaldeans and from before the army of the Aramæans!' and we remained in Jerusalem.—Then came the word of Yahvé unto Yéremyá saying:

Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: go and say unto the man of Yuda and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: will ye not receive instruction to hear my words? (saith Yahvé). || —

The words of Yonadab son of Rekhab which he commanded his sons to drink no wine were kept, and they drank none unto this day because they heard their father's command: | and I have spoken unto you with most earnest speech and ye have  
 15 not hearkened unto me! || and I sent unto you all my servants the prophets with most earnest commission, saying "return ye now every one from his evil way | and make ye your deeds good and follow not other gods to serve them—then ye dwell upon the ground which I have given you and your fathers!" | but ye inclined not your ear nor hearkened unto me; || yea the sons of Yonadab son of Rekhab kept their father's command which he commanded them: | but this people hearkened not unto me! || —Therefore thus saith Yahvé the God of Hosts Israel's God: behold I bring upon Yuda and upon all inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have spoken concerning them, | because I spoke unto them but they heard not, I called unto them but they answered not! ||

And to the house of the Rekhabites said Yéremyá: Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: because ye hearkened unto the command of Yonadab your father | and observed all his commands and did according to all that he commanded you: || therefore thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: | there shall not be wanting men of Yonadab's son of Rekhab that shall stand before me for ever.

Ver. 2, *speaking with them* to bring them with friendly words into the Temple. The man of God, or prophet of former times mentioned ver. 4 is quite unknown to us; his sons, or pupils, must at some time have so much used this hall, or chamber, in the Temple in their prophetic labours, that it could retain their name and still serve for the prophets of this period, *e.g.*, Yéremyá, for their purposes as a teaching room; just as subsequently the Pharisees and other sects had their lecture rooms in the Temple. Comp. the very similar but plainer instance, xxxvi. 10; and *History of Israel*, III. 240 (III. 327

sq.).—It follows from ver. 11, comp. 2 Kings xxiv. 1, that the *Aramaic* army, *i.e.* the army of Damascus, had then been united with the Chaldean army, Damascus had therefore been conquered, comp. xvi. 23-27; and it is certain that we must suppose that this campaign took place in that time of the reign of Yoyaqim when the subjection of this king to the Chaldeans could no longer be avoided.

Ver. 15 like xxv. 5. Ver. 19 like xxxiii. 17, 18; it also appears from ver. 19 that the Rekhabites still adhered to the Yahvé religion.



## V.—CONCLUSION.

## Ch. XXXVI.

The conclusion is formed by the narrative of the destruction of this book in its previous form immediately after its publication, at the command of the king Yoyaqîm, and of its subsequent restoration with several additions. But because this act of the king's gave a striking illustration of his inappreciation of higher truth, the threat against him is repeated here in a still plainer form, vv. 29-31 : moreover, the second production of the book, to which the prophet was impelled by the same spirit which he everywhere obeyed in spite of the anger of the king, furnished at the same time the best proof of how little such a destruction of the material witness of the truth, namely a book, can in the end avail. Comp. *ante* pp. 79, sq.

The narrative itself falls into the four parts: (1) how Yéremyá caused Barûkh to write the book and then caused him to read it publicly on a suitable day, vv. 1-8; (2) the reception Barûkh met with in the execution of the prophet's commands, vv. 9-19; (3) how then the court and the king destroyed the book, vv. 20-26; and (4) what Yéremyá thereupon did finally as prophet and author, vv. 27-32. It appears from the entirely different way in which the piece is introduced, ver. 1, that it was really intended to be the closing piece of the book.

## xxxvi.

- 1 And in the fourth year of Yoyaqîm, the son of Yosia, King of Yuda—came this word to Yéremyá from Yahvé: "Take thee a book-roll and write thereupon all the words which I have spoken to thee concerning Israel and Yuda and the nations, since I have spoken to thee from the days of Yosia unto this day: if perhaps the house of Yuda may hear all the evil which I think to do to them, that they may turn each one from his evil way and I forgive their guilt and sin!" So Yéremyá called Barûkh the son of Nêriya; and Barûkh wrote from the mouth of Yéremyá all the words of Yahvé which he had spoken to him upon

5 a book-roll. But Yéremyá charged Barûkh thus: "I am prevented, cannot go into Yahvé's house: therefore go thou and read out of the roll which thou hast written from my mouth the words of Yahvé aloud before the people in Yahvé's house on a fast-day; and also aloud before all the Yudeans that are come from their cities, shalt thou read them! if perhaps their supplication be presented before Yahvé that they turn each one from his evil way, since the wrath and indignation is great which Yahvé hath spoken concerning this people!" So therefore Barûkh the son of Nêriya did according to all that the prophet Yéremyá had charged him, to read the book of the words of Yahvé in Yahvé's house.

For in the fifth year of Yoyaqîm the son of Yosia king of Yuda in the ninth month it was ordered that all the people of Jerusalem and all the people which had come out of the cities of  
 10 Yuda to Jerusalem should fast before Yahvé; and Barûkh read out of the book the words of Yéremyá in Yahvé's house, in the hall of Gemarya the son of Shaphan the scribe in the upper court before the new gate of Yahvé's house, aloud before the whole people. But Mikhaihu the son of Gemarya the son of Shaphan heard all the words of Yahvé out of the book and went unto the king's house down into the hall of the scribes whilst all the princes were sitting there, Elishama' the scribe and Delayahu the son of Shema'ya and Elnathan the son of 'Akhbor and Gemaryáhu the son of Shaphan and Ssedeqia the son of Chananya and all the princes; and Mikhaihu told them all the words which he had heard when Barûkh read out of the book aloud before the people. Then all the princes sent Yehudi the son of Nethanya the son of Shelemya the son of Kushi to Barûkh saying "the roll out of which thou hast read aloud before the people—take it in thine hand and go!" and Barûkh the son of Nêriya took the roll in his hand and came to them;  
 15 and they said to him "read it yet again aloud before us!" and Barûkh read it aloud before them. But as they heard all the words, they shook one against the other and said to Barûkh "we must tell the king all these words!" and they asked Barûkh "tell us how thou wrotest all these words!"\* and Barûkh said unto them "from his mouth he proclaimed to

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\* *from his mouth.*

me all these words, whilst I wrote them with ink in the book!" Then said the princes to Barûkh "go hide thyself with Yéremyá, and let no man know where ye are!"

- 20 Then they came to the king into the court, leaving the roll in safety in the hall of the scribe Elishama', and told aloud before the king all these words. Then the king sent Yehudi to take the roll and he took it out of the hall of the scribe Elishama'; and Yehudi read it aloud before the king and before all the princes that stood round the king, while the king dwelt in the winter house in the ninth month and the coal-pan was burning before him; now as often as Yehudi read three or four columns he tore it off with the scribe's scissiors and threw them into the fire in the coal-pan, till the whole roll was put entirely into the fire in the coal-pan. And they trembled not and rent not their clothes, the king and all his
- 25 servants who heard all these words; Elnathan and Delayáhu and Gemaryáhu indeed interceded with the king that he would not burn the roll, but he hearkened not unto them. And the king commanded the king's son Yerachmeél and Serayáhu the son of 'Azriel and Shelemáyhu the son of 'Abdeél to take Barûkh the scribe and the Prophet Yéremyá, but Yahvé hid them.

- And Yahvé's word came to Yéremyá, after that the king had burnt the roll with the words which Barûkh wrote from the mouth of Yéremyá, saying: take unto thee again another roll, and write thereupon all the former words which were upon the first roll which Yoyaqím king of Yuda hath burnt!—And concerning Yoyaqím king of Yuda thou shalt say: Thus saith Yahvé: thou burnedst this roll saying: "wherefore wrotest thou thus upon it: | the king of Babel will surely come and destroy this land, and cut off out of it man and beast!"||
- 30 Therefore thus saith Yahvé concerning Yoyaqím king of Yuda: he will have none to sit upon David's throne, | and his dead body will be thrown out to the heat by day and to the cold by night; || I visit upon him and his seed and his servants their guilt | and bring upon them and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the man of Yuda all the evil which I spoke to them but they did not hear! ||—But Yéremyá took another roll and gave it to Barûkh the son of Nériya the scribe, and he wrote thereupon from the mouth of Yéremyá all the words of

the book which Yoyaqîm king of Yuda had burnt in the fire; and yet many like words were added thereto.

1. Why Yéremyá was prevented from going into the Temple at that time is not in any way indicated, ver. 5: there was probably some ordinary hindrance in the way, such as an obstinate sickness that rendered him ceremonially unclean, comp. *Antiquities of Israel*, p. 207 sq. (177 sq.). The book was to be publicly read on a fast day, ver. 6, because the assembled people would then be in a mood to hear such serious words: but how this fast day on which Barûkh executed his commission came to fall not like the prescribed annual day of fasting and atonement, Lev. xxiii. 27, in the seventh but in the ninth month, that is therefore in the winter, vv. 9, 22, is at present obscure; perhaps the annual solemnity had been deferred two months, or (which is still more probable) it was an extraordinary fast on account of the great calamities of the time. Ver. 7 like 2 Kings xxii. 13. The words יִשְׁבֵּר must refer to the substance of the request, acc. § 338 a and § 347 a: they shall pray that God may forgive them if they return. But if a humble petition to any one finds a good place, or at all events is not forthwith sternly rejected, it *falls* before him at his feet as it were, or, in other words is presented, comp. xxxvii. 20, and elsewhere frequently, by Yéremyá particularly. Ver. 8 בִּסְפֶּר must be read instead of בִּסְפָּר, inasmuch as otherwise *is* must be used before the following דְּבָרֵי, acc. vv. 6, 10, 11, 13, 16 sq. —The construction צוֹמִים כָּל הָעָם, ver. 9, is remarkable, almost like an *accusat. cum inf.*, acc. § 336 b; thus the Vulg. correctly, the LXX incorrectly.

2. The Hall, ver. 10, which appears to have been particularly roomy, was

situated tolerably high according to this description, near to the upper, *i.e.*, the priest's outer court, and was clearly merely a creation of Gemarya's, the son of Shaphan, the writer, *i.e.*, minister of justice mentioned 2 Kings xxii. 3, 12, comp. *History of Israel*, III., 267 (III., 365 sq.).—The princes, *i.e.*, the immediate servants of the king (comp. ver. 24) manifestly act only as the miserable instruments of the inclinations of the court as they are known to them: after they have assured themselves that Yéremyá is really implicated, vv. 17, 18, they fortunately cause both to be hidden in time in a secure place from the dangerous anger of the king, vv. 19, 26, but feel compelled,

3. From simple fear to give information, listen together with the king quite unconcernedly and without the least penitence to the threatening divine words, quite unlike the case of 2 Kings xxii. 11, 19, and even calmly look on, with a few exceptions, as the destruction of the words of truth proceeds.—Ver. 15, instead of שָׁב, *sit*, which does not supply a suitable meaning, we must read שָׁב. Ver. 17 the LXX correctly omitted מַעֲזִי, which would here give a false meaning. The נִיֵּת, ver. 22, receives an explanation from the fact that a condition-clause of this kind is conceived as very dependant, and may therefore be unconsciously subordinated in the accusative, § 277 d, although an exactly similar instance is rarely met with. The *doors* of the roll, ver. 23, might be understood of the chapters like the Arabic *báb*: but a chapter *báb* appears to have been so called in the first instance from the new column, and in any case columns accord better with the *roll* of a book.



4. The words of Yoyaqim, vv. 30, 19, the expression being varied a little. 31, are very similar to those xxii. 18,

*The final word to the Scribe Barûkh.*

Ch. xlv.

Without doubt Barûkh here, quite at the end, gladly calls to mind, or has dictated to him the word of comfort which Yéremyá had addressed to him in the troubled time just described, when he in despair feared to succumb to the many toils, troubles, and sufferings of his life. It is true, Yéremyá was unable to give him any great comfort in the midst of a period which was so pregnant with disturbance and destruction, and which so emphatically placed before men's eyes the truth, that the creator is also the destroyer: if the whole earth is thus visited, how can the individual seek to form an exception and to attempt great things? But even the little comfort which Yéremyá had addressed to him, and the truth of which had been confirmed when these words were committed to writing, namely, that he would amidst all these world-storms at least escape with his life, might appear to him of sufficient importance to be recorded in a short appendix.

1.

xlv.

- 1 The word which the prophet Yéremyá spake to Barûkh the son of Nêriya, when he wrote these words from the mouth of Yéremyá in a book, in the fourth year of Yoyaqim the son of Yosia king of Yuda: Thus saith Yahvé the God of Israel concerning thee, O Barûkh! || thou saidst: O woe is me that Yahvé addeth yet trouble to my grief! | weary am I sighing, and rest I find never! || Thus shalt thou say to him: thus saith Yahvé: Behold what I have built up I destroy, and that which I have planted I root up; | and that as regards the whole earth: || and thou wouldest seek high things for thee? seek them not! | For behold I bring evil upon all flesh! saith

Yahvé; | —yet I give thee thy soul for a prey in all places  
whither thou goest! ||

With regard to the מִן, ver. 4, see to another friend of the prophet's,  
§ 277 d.—Ver. 5, *the soul as spoil*, as xxxix. 16-18, is particularly similar.  
xxi. 9; xxxviii. 2, and the promise Further comp. Ps. cxxxi. 1.

#### LATER SUPPLEMENTS.

1. *Historical matter with regard to all the prophet's counsels to Ssedeqia.*

#### Ch. xxxvii.—xxxix.

All that was purely prophetic in the counsels which Yéremyá had repeatedly given to the last king had been completely supplied ch. xxi. xxii., and as far as the history of the matter was concerned the principal facts had been touched upon in such a way xxxiv. 1-7 that the prophet when he caused that piece to be written cannot in the most distant way have meditated the long account which we have in the following chapters, inasmuch as it would have been unreasonable not to have at once included all that we have here in an historical piece. But just because the former words subsequently turned out to be insufficient to make the entire historical relation of the prophet to Ssedeqia intelligible, whilst the result increasingly showed how important it would have been if Ssedeqia had had the courage to follow the good counsels that had been so repeatedly sought and given, the history is now in these chapters fully explained and a more general description of this last king and his bearing towards the divine word is sketched. During the last perilous year and a half he sought Yéremyá's counsel three times: first by a formal deputation, xxxvii. 1-10, next, when Yéremyá had provoked the hatred of the magnates to such a degree that his life was in danger, in secret, xxxvii. 11-21; finally when Yéremyá had been scarcely rescued from actual mortal danger by the king and one of his

courtiers, ch. xxxviii. He seemed constantly to be attracted to the prophet and his counsel by his better self, and yet never possessed the high courage to follow it. How this relation together with the captivity of the prophet lasted until the captivity of the city, and what words of consolation Yéremyá addressed to the courtier that saved his life, is mentioned in conclusion, ch. xxxix. The whole piece is therefore historical, but as might be expected those things only are referred to in the narrative that concern the prophet and his words, and not the general history of the time.

It is further obvious that the entire piece of narration falls into exactly five distinctly separated parts, and forms in this artistic arrangement a complete and finished whole. It also gives us the advantage of enabling us better to take in at one view and understand in their historical connexion the scattered reminiscences of Yéremyá's words to the last king which are found in the previous book.

xxxvii.

- 1 1. And Ssedeqia the son of Yosia was made king instead of Konyáhu son of Yoyaqim, appointed by Nabukodrossor king of Babel in the land of Yuda: but he and his servants and the people of the land hearkened not to Yahvé's word, which he spake by the prophet Yéremyá.—Yet king Ssedeqia sent Yehukhal the priest the son of Shélemyá and Sséphanya the son of Ma'seya to the prophet Yéremyá saying "pray now to Yahvé our God for us!" And Yéremyá at that time went in and out among the people, they had not yet put him into prison;
- 5 and the army of Pharaoh had marched out of Egypt, hearing the report of whom the Chaldæans which were besieging Jerusalem departed from Jerusalem. Then came the word of Yahvé to the prophet Yéremyá thus: Thus saith Yahvé the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say to the king of Yuda who sent you to me to inquire of me: | Behold the army of Pharaoh which hath marched out to your help, returneth back into his land Egypt: || but then the Chaldæans come again and fight against this city, | take it and burn it with fire. || Thus

saith Yahvé : deceive not yourselves thinking the Chaldæans  
 10 shall depart from us ! | for they will not go ; || yea if ye smite the  
 whole army of the Chaldæans which fight with you and there  
 remain of them only some wounded ones, | each one shall rise  
 up in his tent and burn this city with fire !

2. Now when the army of the Chaldæans departed from Jeru-  
 salem before Pharaoh's army, Yéremyá went out of Jerusalem  
 to journey into the land of Benjamin, in order to fetch thence  
 shares in the midst of the people. But when he was in the  
 Benjamin gate where stood an inspecting officer named Yir'iya  
 the son of Shélemyá the son of Chananya, he laid hold of the  
 prophet Yéremyá saying, "unto the Chaldæans thou wilt go  
 over !" And Yéremyá said "a lie, I will not go over to the  
 15 Chaldæans !" but he hearkened not unto him.—So Yir'iya laid  
 hold of Yéremyá and brought him to the princes ; and the  
 princes were angry with Yéremyá and smote him and put him  
 into the prison house in the house of Yonathan the scribe, for  
 they had made of that the prison ; and Yéremyá came into the

1. xxxvii. 1-10. According to all the evidence the same oracle, occasioned by a special deputation, is intended as was referred to xxi. 1-7, inasmuch as the historical circumstances are precisely the same ; the only thing that is specially new here is the powerful illustration of the valour and invincibility of the Chaldeans, ver. 10, comp. 2 Sam. v. 6 ; 2 Kings vii. 3 sq. It is true that in the former passage another

messenger is named instead of Ye-hukhal, and the time is not so accurately described as here ; it might accordingly be conjectured that the former oracle belonged to a somewhat earlier period of the siege ; but it is improbable that the thing occurred twice, and we have here most likely the more accurate account. With מַלְאָךְ, ver. 1, comp. xxiii. 5.

2. xxxvii. 11-21. As Yéremyá was not satisfied with his discourse to the deputation (by whom it was probably not so much as faithfully reported), but impelled by the Spirit went himself to the palace to speak in the same manner there, xxxiv. 1-7, and without doubt spoke everywhere to the same purpose, there is no difficulty in understanding how, under the well organized system of police then in force (xxix. 26), he might under

any pretext that occurred be arrested, chastised, and imprisoned, less by desire of the king than by the indignation of the majority of the magnates. Yéremyá desired, according to ver. 12, to fetch the priests' portions from his native place in the midst of the people, i.e., quite publicly, to provide for his support ; it appearing that מַלְאָךְ, portion, denoted especially those legal revenues a share of which any priest could



gaol and into the shed, and Yéremyá remained there many days.—Then sent king Ssedeqia and took him; and asked him in his house secretly “is there any word from Yahvé?” and Yéremyá said “yes!” and said “into the hand of the king of Babel thou wilt be given!” Then said Yéremyá to king Ssedeqia “what have I done wrong against thee thy servants and this people that ye put me into prison? And where are the Prophets that prophesied thus to you “The king of Babel will not come upon you and this land!” Yet  
20 now hear now my lord the king: give ear to my supplication before thee and bring me not back into the house of Yonathan the scribe that I die not there!” Then king Ssedeqia commanded and they put Yéremyá into the keep-court and gave him a piece of bread every day from the baker’s street, till all the bread in the city was spent; and Yéremyá remained in the keep-court.

xxxviii.

1 3. But Shephatya the son of Matthan Gedalya the son of Pashchor Yukal the son of Shélemýá and Pashchur the son of Malkia heard the words which Yéremyá spake to the whole people: “thus saith Yahvé: he that remaineth in this city will die by the sword and pestilence, | but he that goeth out to the Chaldæans in order to live, will have his soul for a prey and live! || Thus saith Yahvé: | given up yea given up shall this

claim in his native city, but which he was probably compelled personally to apply for; the land of Benjamin was the native land of Yéremyá as a priest. The prison into which he was thrown with many others must have been very unhealthy acc. vv. 20, xxxviii. 26, at least very ill-supplied with bread; and it is described, ver. 16, as if, in accordance with ancient Hebrew custom, both the wells in the house had been used for

this purpose, and also miserable extemporized huts or boarded erections, חֲנִיּוֹת, if this word, occurring here only, is correct; חֲרִירִית, which the LXX read, would be *cloacæ*, or stalls, after the Aram. and Arab. *kharah*. Instead of כִּי בֵּא, ver. 16, which yields no clear sense, it is probably better to read יִבְאֵה with the LXX. With ver. 21 comp. lii. 6.

3. xxxviii. 1-13. It had already been narrated, xxxii. 2-5, that Yéremyá, when brought into the decent court of the palace keep, continued to speak in the way that is briefly indicated vv. 2,

3, comp. xxi. 8-20. The magnates, whose importunity the weak king could not resist, imagine therefore, having observed that the king will not readily assent to their desire to put him to

- city be into the power of the army of the king of Babel that it may take it!" || Then said the princes to the king "let this man be killed, because that he taketh away the courage of the men of war remaining in this city and of the whole people, speaking to them such words! for this man's intentions are not for the weal of this people but for evil." And the king
- 5 Ssedeqia said "see he is in your hand, for the king can do nothing against you." So they took Yéremyá and threw him into the pit of Malkia the king's son in the keep-court, and let Yéremyá down with cords: and in the pit there was no water but only mire, so Yéremyá sank into the mire.—But 'Ebedmélek the Æthiopian, a courtier in the house of the king, heard that they had put Yéremyá into the pit; and when the king was sitting in the Benjamin gate 'Ebedmélek went out of the king's house and spoke to the king thus "My lord the king! these people have done everything evil that they have done to the Prophet Yéremyá, whom they threw into the pit that he dieth on the spot of hunger, because there is no more bread in
- 10 the city!" Then the king commanded 'Ebedmélek the Æthiopian thus: "Take hence three men under thine hand and pull the Prophet Yéremyá out of the pit before he die!" So 'Ebedmélek took the men under his hand and went into the king's house under the clothes' store, and took thence rags of torn and rags of worn out clothes and let them down to Yéremyá in the pit with cords; and 'Ebedmélek the Æthiopian said to Yéremyá "put now the rags of torn and of worn out clothes under the joints of thine arms beneath the cords!" and Yéremyá did so. So they drew up Yéremyá with the cords and brought him up out of the pit; and Yéremyá remained in the keep-court.

death openly, that they manifest special kindness if they have him thrown in a cistern near at hand (probably dug at some time by a certain Malkia) containing no water (Gen. xxxvii. 24), which could therefore serve simply as a more solitary prison, whilst they entertained no scruple against letting him die there of hunger under the pretext that there was a general want of bread, ver. 6, comp. vv. 9, 10; xxxvii. 21. Ver. 2, the *K'tháb*, יְחִיָּה, is quite cor-

rect acc. § 347 b. אֶתְּכֶם, ver. 5, is the form used by Yéremyá for אֶתְּכֶם, just as אֶתְּךָ for אֶתְּךָ, although the points do not remain uniform in these particles after v. 18: on the other hand, שלשים, ver. 10, although the LXX found it, is an evident error in transcription for שלשה. With regard to וימת, ver. 9, see § 342 a, תחתיו is equal to *illico*, 2 Sam. ii. 23. *Underneath the ropes*, ver. 22, that is, looking from above upon the body.

4. Then king Ssedeqia sent and took the Prophet Yéremya unto him in the third entrance to the house of Yahvé; and the king said to Yéremyá, "I ask thee for a word, hide from me not a word!" Then said Yéremyá to Ssedeqia, "if I tell it thee, wilt thou not certainly kill me? and if I counsel thee, thou wilt not hearken to me!" But king Ssedeqia swore secretly to Yéremyá, saying, "As Yahvé liveth who hath created us this soul, verily I will not kill thee nor give thee into the hand of these men who seek thy soul." Thus said Yéremyá to Ssedeqia: Thus saith Yahvé the God of Hosts the God of Israel: if thou givest thyself up to the princes of the king of Babel | thy soul will live and this city will not be burnt with fire, yea thou and thy house wilt live! || but if thou dost not give thyself up to the princes of the king of Babel, this city will be given into the hand of the Chaldæans who will burn it with fire, | and thou wilt not escape from their hand! || Then said king Ssedeqia to Yéremyá, "I am afraid of the Yudeans, who are gone over to the Chaldæans, lest I be  
20 given into their hand and they mock me!" but Yéremyá said "it will not be done! hearken now to the voice of Yahvé with respect to that which I say to thee, that it may go well with thee and thy soul may live! But if thou wilt not give thyself up, then this is the word which Yahvé hath shown me: and behold all the women who remain in the house of the king of Yuda will be brought out to the princes of the king of Babel, | singing:

They misguided thee, they overcame thee—the men of thy peace,

they sank into the bog thy foot—drew back themselves! ||

and all thy wives and sons will they bring out to the Chaldæans, but thou wilt not escape from their hand: | but by the hand of the king of Babel wilt thou be seized, and this city it will be burnt with fire!" || Then said Ssedeqia to Yéremyá:  
25 "let no man know these words, lest thou die! and if the princes hear that I have spoken with thee, and come to thee and say to thee: "tell us now what thou saidest to the king, hide from us nothing lest we kill thee! and what the king said to thee!" then say to them: I was there presenting my petition to the king not to put me back again into the house of Yonathan to die there." And all the princes came to Yéremyá and asked him,

but he told them everything just as the king had commanded; and they were silent before him, because nothing had been heard. So Yéremyá remained in the keepcourt till the day when Jerusalem was taken.

xxxix.

- 1 5. But when Jerusalem had been taken [*in the ninth year of Ssedegia king of Yuda in the tenth month came Nabukodrossor king of Babel and his whole army against Jerusalem and besieged it; and in the eleventh year of Ssedegia in the fourth month on the ninth of the month was the city taken*], and all the princes of the king of Babel came and sat down in the middle-gate,

4. xxxviii. 14-28. After he has thus been saved by the care of an eunuch, comp. xxxix. 15—18, the king, who has been forcibly reminded of him, requests of him the third time an oracle, and this time with greater secrecy, *in the third entry to the Temple*, ver. 14, whereby probably one of the underground passages from the palace to the Temple is intended. And inasmuch as the king, who still continues irresolute, pleads the vain fear of the ridicule of many of his subjects who have already gone over to the enemy, Yéremyá places before him above all the vanity of his fear, and then, as this is of no avail, he meets him with the threat that when he is overcome by force, the numerous women of his palace, given over to the conqueror, will fling at him the taunt, that he has been so miserably deceived by his counsellors, who pretended to be his best friends, and is forsaken by them in his fall, while none of the other conceivable calamities will fail to appear, vv. 20-23. The declaration of the women, ver. 22, appears to be some

song of a proverbial character; and it is very remarkable that its first half recurs 'Obadya, ver. 7, as if the utterance originated in the older oracle bearing the name of 'Obadya which is used by Yéremyá ch. xlviii. also, comp. Vol. II. p. 278, sq. The vocalisation *הַמְּבַעֲרִי*, *thy feet—were sunk*, is not very suitable to the context: a much more forcible sense is obtained if we read *הַמְּבַעֲרִי*, in which case *רגלך* can remain in the singular. And as it is such a very definite picture of the future which forces itself upon the prophetic vision, he says, ver. 21, that God has *caused him to see* this word, comp. xxiv. 1. Instead of *הַשְׂרָה*, ver. 23, it is better to read *הַשְׂרָה*, which is constantly met with in this phrase; for the *אֵת*, which misled the Massôra, is often used by Yéremyá where the verb has no transitive force of any kind, comp. ver. 16; in this case it is first said with an abrupt construction, *and as regards this city, it will be burned*, like xxiii. 33.

5. Ch. xxxix. The main thing is here to separate two large interpolations by a later hand, which we are in a peculiarly favourable position to distinguish from the original piece, inasmuch as the

historical book from which they are for the most part taken is still preserved ch. lii. and 2 Kings ch. xxv. In the first place the interpolation vv. 1, 2: the manner of its introduction into the



- 5 Nergal-Sharésser Samgar-Nabó Sarsekhîm the chief courtier Nergal Sharésser the chief magician and all the princes of the king of Babel: [then Ssedeqia king of Yuda and all the men of war, seeing them, fled and went forth by night out of the city towards the king's-garden through the gate between the double wall, and he fled towards the Steppes; but the Chaldæan soldiers pursued them and overtook Ssedeqia in the Steppes of Jericho, took him and brought him to Nabukodrossor king of Babel to Ribla in the land of Chamáth, and he spoke with him as judge; and the king of Babel slew Ssedeqia's sons in Ribla before his eyes, and the king of Babel slew all the free nobles of Yuda, but he blinded the eyes of Ssedeqia and bound him in chains to bring him to Babel. And the king's house and the house of Yahvé and all the houses of the people the Chaldæans burnt with fire, and they demolished the walls of Jerusalem. The people that remained alive in the city and those who had gone over to him and the multitude still alive, Nabuzaradán the chief of the bodyguard
- 10 led away to Babel; but of the poorer people who had not anything Nabuzaradán the chief of the bodyguard left some in the land of Yuda and gave them vineyards and fields at that day.—But Nabukodrossor king of Babel commanded concerning Yéremyá by Nabuzaradán the chief of the bodyguard thus: "take him

context showing it to be such, whilst, further, the subsequent inserter confounds the time when the famine prevailed in the city (lii. 6, comp. xxxviii. 21) with the conquest, although the latter, inasmuch as it is so definitely distinguished from the famine, must have occurred somewhat later. Then the verses 4-13 (which are not found in the LXX, though perhaps merely on account of the similarity of the end), are interpolated, because, in the first place, vv. 4-10 recur verbatim in the same source from which the first interpolation is taken, and there is no reason whatever for supposing that the author of that strictly historical book borrowed them from this passage: on the contrary, the text is here less complete (vv. 4, 9) and less correct, certain necessary words having been undoubtedly

lost ver. 8 after the second בית, and it being certainly better to read התמון, ver. 9, instead of the last העם הנשארים, after 2 Kings xxv. 11. In the next place, an indirect contradiction with xl. 1-6 is occasioned by vv. 11-13, which the inserter probably introduced to restore the connexion. For if the full favour of Nabukodrossor and the permission to go where he liked was granted to Yéremyá before he was liberated from the court of the keep ver. 14, it does not appear why he like all the rest was put in chains and carried away to Rama in order to be brought to Babel, xl. 1, and how it was he did not get his liberty before he was on the way, xl. 2-6. Really he was set free by the conquest from the court of the keep and delivered to his old patron Gedalya (the son of Achiqâm, who had

- and keep thine eye upon him, and do him no evil at all, but as he shall say unto thee so do unto him!" So Nabuzaradân the chief of the bodyguard sent Nabushazbar chief courtier Nergal Sharesser chief magician and all the rulers of the king of Babel—] they sent and took Yéremyá out of the guardhouse and gave him to Gedalya the son of Achiqâm the son of Shaphan to take him away to his house, and so he remained in the midst of the people.—But to Yéremyá, whilst he was kept fast in the keepcourt, had the word of Yahvé come thus: Go now and say to 'Ebedmélek the Æthiopian: Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts the God of Israel: behold I bring my words upon this city for evil and not for good, | and they will stand before thee at that day! || yet I save thee at that day, saith Yahvé, | and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the people of whom thou art in dread: || but I will save thee and thou wilt not fall by the sword, | and thou wilt have thy soul for a prey because thou trustedst in me! saith Yahvé! ||

likewise been his protector previously, acc. xxvi. 24): but then came the burning of the city, lii. 12, the selection of those who were destined to be sent to Babel and other destinations, when Nabuzaradân also, and indeed a month later, contrary to ver. 13, was specially commissioned by the king, lii. 12 (better 2 Kings xxv. 8), and at that time Yéremyá, the Chaldeans not yet having learnt the facts that were in his favour, might be all along considered as destined for banishment, until his lot happily changed for the better at Rama, as is only too briefly narrated xl. 1. If we omit these interpolations (which, moreover, contain nothing of importance as far as Yéremyá and his prophetic book are concerned), the best connexion in the narrative is immediately restored, and the word **וישבו**, ver. 3, comp.

xli. 17, thus becomes intelligible; the entire piece closes better and assumes a more finished form. With regard to the style and language of the interpolations as far as ver. 10, it is only perhaps in **יָהוָה מְשַׁפְּטִים** ver. 5, comp. i. 17; iv. 12; xii. 1, scarcely in the **יָהוָה** ver. 9, comp. xxix. 1, that anything can be discovered that points to Yéremyá, while from ver. 14 every word points to him.—*The words will abide before thee*, ver. 16, thou wilt vividly remember them.—With regard to vv. 3-10, comp. *History of Israel* IV. p. 273 sq. (III. p. 806 sq.).

On the other hand, the short narrative 2 Kings xxv. 22-26, which is not found in ch. lii., may have been borrowed by the author of the Books of Kings from ch. xl.-xliii.

2. *Historical details regarding the flight into Egypt.*

## Ch. xl.-xliii.

A new but very mournful call to more active prophetic work was presented to the prophet, when in the first months after the destruction of the Temple, the remnant of the Yudeans that were still with him in Palestine felt compelled to flee into Egypt, and as a fact really fled thither. As the history of this flight was somewhat involved, we have a detailed narrative of the chief points. It is recorded how at first, contrary to their expectation, a happy opportunity was given to the prophet and a remnant of the Yudeans to remain quietly in their country under the protection of Gedalya, xl. 1-6, 7-12, but how this opportunity was cruelly cut off by the disgraceful treachery of a descendant of the royal house, xl. 13—xli. 15, until the meagre remnant, contrary to the emphatic counsel of Yéremya, which had previously been desired, fled into Egypt, and also compelled the prophet to accompany them thither, because it was after all not desirable to have no prophet at all with them, xli. 16—xliii. 7. Finally, a symbolical prophecy even upon Egyptian soil, so that this piece also closes, after the peculiar manner of our prophet, with a symbolical confirmation of what has preceded, xliii. 8-13.

This piece also, like the previous one, falls as a narrative into five sections, which are so clearly separate that there can be no doubt as to this being the correct division of the whole. It might, however, naturally create surprise to observe how this piece is connected with its predecessor. At the commencement, xl. 1—5, we see the prophet suddenly led captive amongst the ordinary multitude as far as Rama, some two hours to the north on the way to Babel, while we also hear the Chaldean commander speaking to him as if the prophet had previously had a conversation with him and had made him acquainted with his prophetic view of matters. In fact, it

cannot be denied that between ch. xxxix. and ch. xl. an entirely similar piece may very easily have been lost.

xl.

- 1 1. The word which came to *Yéremyá* from *Yahvé*, after *Nabuzaradân* captain of the bodyguard had let him go from *Rama*, in that he gave him a hearing when he was bound with chains amid all the captives of *Jerusalem* and *Yuda* which were being taken away to *Babel*.—But the chief of the bodyguard gave *Yéremyá* a hearing and said unto him: “*Yahvé* thy God hath spoken this evil concerning this place, and *Yahvé* brought and did as he had spoken: because ye have sinned against *Yahvé* and have not hearkened to his voice, so this word cometh to you. Yet now I loose thee even this day from the chains upon thine hand: if it seemeth good to thee to come with me to *Babel*, then come, and I will keep mine eye upon thee; if it seemeth not good to thee to come with me to *Babel*, then let it alone: behold all the land is free unto thee, whither it seemeth good to thee and most advantageous to go thither go!” And as he did not yet
- 5 answer, he said “go back to *Gedalya* the son of *Achiqâm* the son of *Shaphan* whom the king of *Babel* hath set over the cities of *Yuda*, and remain with him in the midst of the people; or wherever it seemeth best to thee to go, go!” and the captain of the bodyguard gave him rations and gifts, and released him. So *Yéremyá* came to *Gedalya* the son of *Achiqâm* to *Mispah*, and remained with him in the midst of the people who yet remained in the land.

2. But when all the captains living in the country with their

1. xl. 1-6. It is evident from the whole plan of the book that the heading, ver. 1, extends only to ch. xliii., and that therefore the oracle that is here announced must be that which follows xlii. 7—22 with its symbolical appendix xliii. 8-13. All that follows from ver. 2 to xlii. 6, may be considered historical preface and explanation for the oracle which comes afterwards as the chief portion of the piece.—Ver. 5 it appears necessary to read *וַיִּשְׁמַע* and to insert after it *וַיִּהְיֶה*, to obtain a

proper meaning; for evidently the commander pauses somewhat after ver. 4 with the secret wish that *Yéremyá* may resolve to accompany him to *Babel*, and only as he hesitates to answer him with regard to this, does he give him open permission to return to his protector. Moreover, it is clearly seen from vv. 3, 4, that *Nabuzaradân* does not confer this favour upon him until he had fully learnt how *Yéremyá* had spoken previously. -

2. xl. 7-12. It follows from ver. 12 that *Mispah*, whither *Gedalya* removed

his residence manifestly because *Jerusalem* had been burnt and whither all



men heard that the king of Babel had set Gedalya the son of Achiqâm over the land, and had committed to him men and women and children, some also of the common people, people who had not been taken away captive into Babel, | they came to Gedalya unto Mizpah, both Ismael the son of Nethanya and Yochanan the son of Qaréach Seraya the son of Tanchumeth the sons of 'Aifai of Neṭopha and Yazanya the son of Ma'khathi they and their men; and Gedalya the son of Achiqâm the son of Shaphan adjured them and their men, saying: "fear not to serve the Chaldæans! remain in the land and serve the king of Babel that it may go well with you!

10 But I will remain in Misspah to serve the Chaldæans who will come to us, and gather you now wine and fruit and oil, put them in your vessels and remain in your cities which ye have occupied!" And also all the Yudeans who were in Môab among the sons of 'Ammôn and Edôm, and who were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babel had left Yuda a remnant and that he had set over them Gedalya the son of Achiqâm the son of Shaphan: so all the Yudeans returned home out of all the places whither they were driven, came into the land of Yuda to Gedalya at Misspah and gathered much wine and fruit.

3. And Yochanan the son of Qaréach and all the captains living in the field came to Gedalya at Misspah and said to him, "Knowest thou that Ba'lis the king of the sons of 'Ammôn hath sent Ismael the son of Nethanya to kill thee?" but

those who desired to remain in the cities must first go to procure his protection, was situated in Yuda, or rather to the north of Jerusalem in the tribe of Benjamin not far from Rama, 1 Kings xv. 17-22; in return for the tribute in wine, fruit and oil which the clients help to pay, he will alone *stand before the Chaldeans*, i.e., represent them with regard to the demands of this people and protect them from injustice, in order thus to keep the land in peace before them. It should be observed that Ismael at the very commencement, ver. 8, re-

ceives such prominent mention, because he becomes afterwards of such importance, comp. § 359. It appears incidentally in the course of the narrative, as a sign that it is quite ancient, that it was then autumn after the Temple had been destroyed in August of the same year; and acc. xli. 1 the seventh, i.e., the great festival month of the year had not then arrived.—Instead of *ויונתן בני*, which is probably a false reading originating in *ויוחנן*, the LXX has here and the Hebrew text 2 Kings xxv. 23 simply *בן*.

3. xl. 13—xli. 15. Inasmuch as the *Magnates of the king* (i.e., of the last king

Ssedeqia, comp. ver. 10), who are named xl. 2, do not appear according to the con-

- 15 Gedalya the son of Achiqâm believed them not. Yochanan the son of Qaréach said indeed secretly to Gedalya in Misspah thus: "let me I pray thee go and slay Ismael the son of Nethanya, and no one shall know it! why should he kill thee so that all the Yudeans which are gathered unto thee be scattered and the remnant of Yuda perish?" but Gedalya the son of Achiqâm said to Yochanan the son of Qaréach, "do not this  
xli. thing! for thou speakest falsely of Ismael!"—But in the  
1 seventh month came Ismael the son of Nethanya the son of Elishama' of the royal blood and one of the magnates of the king and ten men with him to Gedalya the son of Achiqâm at Misspah and ate there a meal together in Misspah. Then Ismael the son of Nethanya rose up with the ten men by him and smote Gedalya the son of Achiqâm the son of Shaphan with the sword and killed him, whom the king of Babel had set over the land; and Ismael slew all the Yudeans who were with him with Gedalya in Misspah and the Chaldæans who were found there, even the  
5 men of war. Then on the second day after the death of Gedalya, while yet no one knew it, there came men from Sikhem from Shilo and from Samaria eighty in number, with beards shorn and clothes rent and cutting themselves, bearing gifts and incense to bring to the house of Yahvé: then Ismael the son of Nethanya went to meet them from Misspah, weeping all along, and as he met them he said to them, "come to Gedalya the son of Achiqâm!" But as soon as they were come into the midst of the city, Ismael the son of Nethanya slew them into the well, he and his men with him; yet ten men were found among them, who said to Ismael "kill us not! for we have stores

text to be different from the ten men, ו would have to be omitted before עשרה: but since רב is not a word used by Yéremyá and the words omitted by the LXX could be dispensed with without creating any defect in the text, it is probable that we have here only an ancient gloss. However, the words ורבֵּי המלך can still be treated as dependent on the foregoing מֶן; and it is conceivable that the last king, after the manner of the Chaldeans, nominated a small number of *grandeess* and gave them a

Chaldean title.—The narrative itself immediately explains more definitely that only the few Chaldean soldiers are intended, ver. 3, who had been given to Gedalya as a guard, comp. vv. 10-15.—It is not difficult to suppose, ver. 5, that there continued to stand on the site of Jerusalem an altar to which smaller offerings (not animal sacrifices) were brought.—No one could be more cunning and deceitful than this magnate: acc. vv. 7, 8 he pretends the profoundest sympathy with the mourners, but his

- underground in the field of wheat and barley and oil and honey!" then he ceased and killed them not among their brethren. Now the well wherein Ismael threw all the bodies of the men whom he slew with Gedalya, is that which king Asa built out of fear of Ba'sha king of Israel: Ismael the son of Nethanya filled it with the slain. And Ismael carried away the whole of the remainder of the people who were in Misspah, the king's daughters and the whole of the people yet living in Misspah over whom Nabuzaradân the captain of the bodyguard had set Gedalya the son of Achiqâm, these Ismael the son of Nethanya led forth captive, and went to go over to the sons of 'Ammôn.—Then Yochanan the son of Qaréach and all the captains with him heard all the evil which Ismael the son of Nethanya had done: they took all the men, went to fight with Ismael the son of Nethanya and found him by the great water in Gibeon. And as soon as all the people with Ismael saw Yochanan the son of Qaréach and all the captains with him, they were glad; and all the people whom Ismael led forth out of Misspah, turned round returned and went to Yochanan the son of Qaréach: but Ismael the son of Nethanya escaped with eight men before Yochanan and went to the sons of 'Ammôn.
4. Then Yochanan the son of Qaréach and all the captains with him took all the remainder of the people whom he had taken

real design is to discover whether they wish to be of Gedalya's party, and finding that that is the case he entices them into the city to slay them within its walls.—The well into which the jealous descendant of David in his wild rage casts all the slain together with (this is the force of *בִּיר*, *by the side of*, ver. 9) Gedalya, vv. 7, 9, and which should have named before, ver. 3 (having been omitted there by an oversight),

belonged most likely to the fortifications of the city which Asa had built, acc. 1 Kings xv. 22; for this description shows that the well was very large, being made to supply a whole city with water. Similarly the *pool* of Gibeon, 2 Sam. ii. 13, near the not very distant city of Gibeon, is called *the great water* (as a proper-name in Hebrew without the article).

4. xli. 16—xlili. 7. The words *מִן הַמִּצְפָּה*, ver. 16, become intelligible only if the words *אֲשֶׁר שָׁבָה יִשְׁמַעֵאל* have been left out before them, in accordance with ver. 10: and it is certain that it was only because they were wanting at the time of the

LXX that in this translation all the words from *מִן* to *אֲחִיקָם* have been left out as no longer intelligible. The circumstantial character of the narrative, ver. 16, is the most evident proof that a new section really began here, all that had been previously told being

away again from Ismael the son of Nethanya, whom he led away captive out of Misspah after he had slain Gedalya the son of Achiqâm, men expert in war and women and eunuchs whom he had brought back out of Gibeon; and went and settled down in the inn of Kimham beside Bâthlehem, in order to go thence into Egypt from the Chaldæans, because they were afraid of them since Ismael the son of Nethanya had slain Gedalya the son of Achiqâm whom the king of Babel had set over the land. But all the captains and Yochanan the son of Qaréach and 'Azarya the son of Hosha'ya and all the people both small and great went and said to the Prophet Yéremyá: "let our supplication be presented before thee that thou pray for us to Yahvé thy God for all this remnant, for we are few remaining out of many as thine eyes see us: that Yahvé thy God may tell us the way in which we should go, and the word that we should do!" Then said the Prophet Yéremyá to them "I have heard it; I will now pray to Yahvé your God according to your words, and every word that Yahvé shall return you will I tell you, and keep back from you nothing!"

5 And they said to Yéremyá "May Yahvé be a sure witness against us, that we will so do according to every word wherewith Yahvé thy God chargeth thee to us; be it good or bad, we will hearken unto the voice of Yahvé our God to whom we send thee, that it may go well with us, when we listen to the voice of Yahvé our God!"—And after ten days—then came the word of Yahvé to Yéremyá, and he called Yochanan the son of Qaréach and all the captains with him and all the people great and small and said to them: Thus saith Yahvé the God of Israel, to whom ye sent me to lay your supplication before

gathered up in this verse: for this may naturally be done at the commencement of a new section. The *inn of Kimham's* near Bâthlehem, ver. 17, was probably a large public building for travellers, a caravanseraï, erected by a certain Kimham, such as are still frequently built in those regions for the convenience of travellers; and we are able to trace the life of Kimham and the period when he lived with sufficient certainty, comp. *History of Israel*, III. 216 (III. 292 sq.).

The rare word גִּרְיָה, which was misunderstood by many early translators, was correctly interpreted as μάγδα, as appears from Josephus' *Antiquities*, x. 9, 5.—Instead of יוֹנִיָּה, xlii. 1, which may have been transferred from xl. 8, it is necessary to read עֲזַרְיָה, acc. to the LXX and xliii. 2.—It is not necessary that the prophet should say why the oracle did not come to him until after ten days: it is sufficient that he did not previously possess the ele-



- 10 him: || if ye remain dwelling in this land, then will I build you up and not destroy, and plant you and not root up, | for it repenteth me of the evil I have done to you: || be not afraid of the King of Babel of whom you are afraid! | be not afraid of him (saith Yahvé): for I am with you to help you and to wrest you out of his hand, || and give you mercy that he may have mercy upon you | and let you dwell in your land! || But if ye will say “we will not dwell in this land!” | so that ye hearken not unto the voice of Yahvé your God, || thinking “no! but will we go into Egypt, where we shall see no war nor hear trumpets, | and shall not hunger for bread, and there will
- 15 we dwell!” || —and now therefore hear the word of Yahvé concerning this ye Yudeans which yet remain: thus saith Yahvé of Hosts the God of Israel: || if ye indeed set your face to go into Egypt, and go to sojourn there: || then will the sword of which ye are afraid—reach you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine which maketh you anxious—thither will it pursue you into Egypt that ye die there, || in order that all the men who have set their faces to go to Egypt to sojourn there, die by the sword by famine and pestilence | and have none that escapeth and fleeth from the evil that I bring upon them! || For thus saith Yahvé of Hosts the God of Israel: As my wrath and indignation was poured out upon Jerusalem’s inhabitants, so will my wrath be poured out upon you if ye go into Egypt, | that ye be an execration and a terror and a curse and scorn, and ye see this place no more! ||—Yahvé hath spoken concerning you ye Yudeans who yet remain: go not into Egypt! ||
- 20 ye must know that I this day testify unto you || how ye sinned against your souls in that ye yourselves sent me to Yahvé your God saying “pray for us to Yahve our God, | and all that

vation of mind which it required, and the prophet must patiently wait for this together with the truth itself.—The oracle explains itself with sufficient clearness, vv. 9-18; with regard to **שׁוּב**, ver. 10, see § 240 b; instead of **הָשִׁיב**, ver. 12, **הָשִׁיב** must be read as the antithesis of **חַגְלֹת**, xliii. 3, as the Pesh. and Vulg. have correctly felt. The words ver. 17 contain more than a simple repetition of vv. 15, 16, adding

the third and most terrible kind of death in order to conclude the whole threat with the greater force, entirely in the manner of *Yéremyá*; comp. the very similar passage, xliv. 12, 13. But as the prophet clearly notes at the end, if only from the gestures of his hearers, that he has spoken in vain this time also, in a threatening tone he adds, that neither this time has the divine word been left in any case unattested, ver. 19,

Yahvé our God saith so tell it us that we may do it!" || I told  
 it you | but ye did not hearken to the voice of Yahvé your  
 God, yea to nothing with which he charged me to you! ||  
 Therefore ye must know that ye will die by the sword by famine  
 and pestilence | in the place whither it is your pleasure to go to  
 xliii. sojourn there! ||—But when Yéremyá had finished speaking to  
 1 all the people all the words of Yahvé their God wherewith  
 Yahvé their God had charged him to them, all these words:  
 then said 'Azarya the son of Hosha'ya and Yochanan the son  
 of Qaréach and all the haughty men, speaking to Yéremyá  
 "thou speakest lies! Yahvé our God hath not charged thee to  
 say: "ye shall not go into Egypt to sojourn there!" but  
 Barúkh the son of Nêriyah misleadeth thee against us, in order  
 to give us into the hands of the Chaldæans to kill us and lead  
 5 us away to Babel." So Yochanan the son of Qaréach and all  
 the captains and all the people hearkened not to the voice of  
 Yahvé to remain in the land; but Yochanan and all the  
 captains took all the Yudeans still remaining who had returned  
 out of all the countries whither they had been driven to tarry  
 in the land of Yuda, the men the women and children and the  
 king's daughters and all the souls which Nabuzaradân captain  
 of the body guard had left with Gedalya the son of Achiqâm  
 the son of Shaphan, together with the Prophet Yéremyá and  
 Barúkh the son of Nêriya; and they came into the land of

and concludes with the unpleasant truth,  
 that the threatened punishment must  
 come for the very reason that they have  
 not sought the oracle with sincere in-  
 tentions, but have promised obedience  
 in the hope that the prophet will speak  
 conformably to their secret purposes,  
 that they have therefore greatly deceived  
 themselves, had beforehand lied to  
 themselves, vv. 20-22. This is at all  
 events the meaning of the words with  
 the present readings: הִתְעָה, ver. 20,  
 would then be the same as הִשָּׂא,  
 xxxvii. 9, and might be construed with  
 ב, precisely in this sense of *to deceive*,  
 like הִתַּל, פָּנָה and all similar verbs.  
 But the meaning becomes much more  
 simple and forcible if הִתְעָה is read  
 with the LXX instead of הִתְעָה,

ver. 20 (comp. xliv. 7) and then all the  
 words in the long sentence vv. 19-21  
 are correctly connected and construed.  
 The whole discourse has then a double  
 appendix and conclusion: the longer  
 one with its slower movement and its  
 attestation, iv. 19-21, and the shorter  
 one in the form of a summary, ver.  
 22. The attestation with a following  
 כִּי is like Deut. iv. 26; viii. 19; the  
 sense also is similar, only that in our  
 passage the prophetic idea of mortal sin  
 comes in.—xliii. 2, 'Azarya is named  
 first, contrary to the custom, manifestly  
 because he was at that time the first to  
 withdraw from the solemn promise under  
 the pretext that the faithful Barúkh mis-  
 led his master from a liking for the  
 Chaldeans.—The circumstances men-

Egypt because they hearkened not unto the voice of Yahvé, and came to T'haphanhes.

5. Then came the word of Yahvé to Yéremyá in T'haphanhes saying: Take with thine hand great stones and stick them in the soft earth at the entrance of Pharoah's house in T'haphanhes in the presence of the men of Yuda, and say to them :
- 10 Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts the God of Israel: behold I send Nabukodrossor king of Babel my servant, | and set his throne upon these stones which I stuck here, that he may spread his pavilion over them; || and he cometh and smiteth the land of Egypt, | then what is for death—to death, what is for captivity—to captivity, and what is for the sword—to the sword! || and I kindle a fire in the houses of the Egyptian gods, that he may burn them and carry them away captive, | that he may cover himself in the land of Egypt as the shepherd covereth himself in his garment, and go forth thence in peace; || and he will break in pieces the statues of Heliopolis which is in the land of Egypt, | and burn the houses of the Egyptian gods with fire! ||

tioned vv. 5, 6 as well as xl. 5, 7, were probably further touched upon before

ch. xl., comp p. 285 sq.

5. xliii. 8-13. When they had arrived at T'haphanhes (Τάφναι) LXX, one of the first Egyptian cities which they could enter, not far from Pelusium, a telling symbol was presented to the prophet, which enabled him to proclaim the two-fold truth that must have been constantly present to his mind in Egypt at the time: first, that the foolish fugitives, who placed their entire salvation upon such a kingdom as Egypt, would not be secure here either, and, second, that the Egyptian idolatry which he now saw in his immediate neighbourhood deserved no less than these fugitives the Divine chastisement. The hero of that time, Nabukodrossor, might effect both results by a victorious attack upon Egypt. When therefore Yéremyá observed at the entrance of the Egyptian royal palace of this city some soft

clay or mortar in which stones might easily be stuck and set up, it appeared to him suddenly as if he must stick in this soft earth great stones, such as could bear a throne, in order to provide beforehand, according to the Divine will, a throne for Nabukodrossor, who was quickly and surely coming, to provide here in the midst of Egypt, yea, before an Egyptian palace, a throne for him, over which he would have only to spread the state covering that constitutes the outward part of a throne in order to take his seat upon a throne in the midst of Egypt and to execute from it that twofold Divine commission. The symbol was the more natural inasmuch as images of the gods were so often placed at the entrance of Egyptian temples: before this royal palace shall be enthroned another monarch! But as Yéremyá

only anticipates an invasion of Egypt by the Chaldean and his victorious return from it, the other symbol is added: as easily as the shepherd in the open field wraps himself in the cool night in his mantle, will he be able to grasp Egypt with his hand and fling it round him like an easily managed garment, in order then to leave the land as an absolute conqueror, clothed in this attire of booty, in peace, without an enemy. And as Yéremyá had without doubt supplied this sign by his own hand at this place, and had explained its meaning to those who had collected round the strange sign, so he now describes it here from memory, **טָמַן בִּי**, ver. 9, is in this place necessarily to *stick in*, to *put in*, and, as the nature of the case demands, in such a way that the high stones rose considerably above the surface, while below they stood

firm, comp. Prov. xix. 24; and as the signification of **מָלַט** is fixed by the rest of the Semitic languages, and the meaning of **מָלַיִן** is clear, Nah. iii. 14, but does not suit here, it is probable that **בַּמִּלְבֵּן** has only arisen by mistake from the previous **בַּמִּלְטָה**.—The statues of *Heliopolis*, which was not far off, ver. 13, were specially famous and much visited, comp. Herod. ii. iii.; Strab. xvii. 1 ed. stereotyp., T. iii. p. 444 sq.: but because there were in addition to this Egyptian *Heliopolis* others situated in Asia, the addition is made **אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם**, instead of which the LXX have the Egyptian name of this city (**τοὺς ἐν Ὠν**), as if they had read **בְּאוֹן**; comp., however, xxxii. 8, where the LXX retain a similar addition.

### 3. *A serious warning against the revival of idolatry.*

#### Ch. xlv.

The worship of the Queen of Heaven (the moon), which Yéremyá had denounced above, vii. 18, had been abandoned for some time, ver. 18, at the command of some of the kings, such as Yosia and probably at times Ssedeqia, and in consequence of attention to the exhortations of the prophets, which had been promoted by the calamities of the times; but now it was revived in Egypt, probably because those who had fled thither fell through the continuance of their misfortunes, ver. 14, into despair of the pure service of Yahvé. The example of Egypt, which had in such various ways fallen into similar superstitions, may also have produced its effect, for it is evident that a considerable period had now passed and Yudeans had become settled in *Patrós* even, *i.e.*, Upper Egypt, vv. 1, 15. It was especially the women who adhered most zealously to this sensuous worship and determined to keep their vows to



the goddess, vv. 9, 15-19, 24, 25. The aged prophet appeared once more in public, on some occasion which called almost all the exiles together, with his serious warning and threat, and describes in this piece how he spoke with all his strength against this sin, vv. 2-14, how the assembly replied to him defiantly and impenitently, vv. 15-19, and how he was neither restrained nor dismayed thereby but only proclaimed the truth more firmly, vv. 20-30. It is remarkable that even this piece closes with the mention of a sign with which the prophet confirmed his oracle, vv. 29, 30.

xliv.

1 The word which came to Yéremyá concerning all the Yudeans who dwell in the land of Egypt, | who dwell in Migdol T'haphanhes Memphis and in the land of Patrôs:

1. Thus saith Yahvé of Hosts the God of Israel: Ye have seen all the evil which I have brought upon Jerusalem and all the cities of Yuda: | and now they are a wilderness this day, and no one dwelleth in them, || because of their wickedness which was practised to provoke me, | to go away to burn incense and to serve other gods which were not known, neither to you nor to your fathers! || though indeed I sent unto you all my servants the Prophets with most zealous sending, saying: |  
 5 "do not, now, this horrible thing which I hate!" || but they heard not and inclined not their ear, | to depart from their wickedness, not to burn incense to other gods: || therefore my wrath and indignation was poured out and burned through the cities of Yuda and through the streets of Jerusalem, | so that they became a desolation a wilderness this day. || —Therefore thus saith Yahvé God of Hosts Israel's God: why do ye great evil against yourselves, | —to cut off unto you man and woman child and suckling out of the midst of Yuda, to leave unto you no remnant! || to provoke me with the work of your hand, to burn incense to other gods in the land of Egypt whither ye come to sojourn, | —to cut them off unto you, and in order that ye become a curse and a scorn among all the nations of the earth! || Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers and those of the kings of Yuda and those of his

princes, and your own and your wives' wickednesses! | which were wrought in the land of Yuda and in the streets of Jerusalem? ||

- 10 2. They are not contrite to this day and fear not, | they walk not in my doctrine and laws which I have put before you and your fathers! || Therefore thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: behold I set my face towards you for evil, | and to root out all Yuda! || and I take the last Yudeans who set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to tarry there | —yea all shall perish falling in the land of Egypt, by the sword and famine perish both great and small, | by the sword and famine die, and become an execration a horror and a curse and scorn; || I visit it upon those that dwell in the land of Egypt as I visited it upon Jerusalem | —by the sword by famine and pestilence: || and there will be none of the last Yudeans who are come into the land of Egypt to tarry there, who escapeth and is saved, | and who returneth home to the land of Yuda whither ye lift up your desire to return home to dwell there; ] for there will none return home save dispersed ones. ||

According to the heading, xliv. 1, the fugitives had already been dispersed in north-east (Migdol and T'haphanhes), in central (Memphis), and in south Egypt (Patrôs), but appear just at this time to have assembled perhaps at the celebration of some annual feast, ver. 15.

1—2. The address to the people points first, vv. 2-6, to the past, that is unalterable, and presents clearly its instructions and warnings; it then comes to give the well-meant exhortation, not, in this changed time, to fall again, continuing the old transgressions, into the opposite of the worship of Yahvé, a sin that can produce no other effect than that Yahvé, in the highest degree indignant, will leave to them, the fools that really only injure themselves thereby (Isa. iii. 9), not even a remnant of life, prosperity, and honour, as they have indeed already lost so much, 7-9; it then becomes, finally, as

if anticipating that this present warning will be of little use, simple threats against the obduracy of the people, vv. 10-14. As the third person plural, in cases like vv. 3-5, must be understood as indefinite, the direct address can in any case interchange with it in the second person. The word נָשִׂי, ver. 9, appears at first sight to be very suitable, as it was precisely from the wives that the greatest criminality in this matter had proceeded; but its suffix has in this place no clear reference, and that שָׂרִי (of which there are traces in the LXX) must be read instead of it appears from vv. 17, 21. Ver. 14, וְלִשְׁנוֹב, is, acc. § 351 c, simply the continuation of the verbs that lie at the basis of פָּלִיט וּשְׂרִיד; similarly vv. 18, 19. At the end a paronomasia between פָּלִיט at the beginning of this verse and this פָּלִיטִים is forced upon the prophet almost against his will (for he does not affect them), caused by the

- 15 3. Then all the men who knew that their wives burnt incense to other gods, and all the women who stood there in a great assembly, and all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt and in Patrô's answered Yéremyá saying: "the word that thou hast spoken to us in Yahvé's name—we hearken not unto thee at all! but we will carry out every word which hath been spoken out of our mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we and our fathers our kings and princes did in the cities of Yuda and in the streets of Jerusalem and were satisfied with bread, and were prosperous and saw no evil; but since we ceased to burn incense to the queen of heaven and to pour out drink offerings to her, we have had want of all things and perished by the sword and famine.—"And when we burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, have we then without our husbands made her cakes to move her, and poured out drink offerings to her."—But Yéremyá said to all the people, to the men and to the women and to all the people who answered him with words, thus: What? hath not on the incense wherewith ye burned incense in the cities of Yuda and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye and your fathers, your kings and princes and the people of the land—thereon hath not Yahvé thought and hath it [not] come into his mind? And Yahvé cannot any longer bear it, because of the wickedness of your deeds because of the abominations which ye committed, so that your land became an astonishment a horror and a curse\* at this day, because that ye burned incense and that ye sinned against Yahvé and hearkened not unto Yahvé's voice nor walked in

fact that this word also denotes *mes-senger of evil tidings*, Job i. 14 sq.: a

few such may remain!

3. Ver. 17 is still further explained by ver. 25: vows are the things spoken of. The sense of the whole passage alone shows that the women are speaking ver. 19; for even in the verb **מַקְטִירִים** the *fem.* is not employed; on the other hand, the *fem.* prevails, ver. 25, yet the

*msc.* also creeps in. **הַעֲצִיב** denotes here, as if from some dialect, to press, push, then *touch*, *move*, make one favourable to one, which assumes in Arabic the more distinct form *'atafa*.

In his reply, vv. 20-23 (with **דָּבַר**, ver. 20, comp. 2 Kings xxii. 20.) **יְהוֹ**

\* Without an inhabitant.

his doctrine and his laws and constitutions;—therefore this evil befell you this day!

4. And Yéremyá said to the whole people and to all the  
 25 women: Hear ye Yahvé's word, all Yudeans in the land of Egypt! || thus saith Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God: ye and your wives—ye spake thus with your mouth and fulfilled it with your hands, | saying: "we will carry out our vows, which we vowed to burn incense to the queen of heaven and to pour out drink offerings unto her!" | ye set up your vows, and ye did carry out your vows: || therefore hear ye Yahvé's word all ye Yudeans that dwell in the land of Egypt: | here swear I by my great name (saith Yahvé): | verily no more will my name be pronounced in the mouth of any Yudean that saith "as the Lord Yahvé liveth" in the whole land of Egypt! || behold I watch over them for evil and not for good, | that all Yudeans in the land of Egypt perish by the sword and the famine until they disappear; || and the escaped of the sword will return home from the land of Egypt to the land of Yuda few in number, | that the Yudeans that have come to the land of Egypt to sojourn there may know: whose word will stand mine or theirs! ||

5. And this is the sign unto you (saith Yahvé), that I will visit you in this place, | that ye may know that my words concern-

remyá insists especially on the point, that it follows plainly enough from the present great misery how deeply the only true God abominates the idolatrous sacrifices which were formerly presented in the holy land, vv. 21-23; and he was not compelled to go beyond this proof, because his opponents, although they sacrificed to the queen of heaven, did not on that account at all intend to wholly forsake Yahvé, comp. ver. 26.

יֹכֵל, ver. 22, LXX ἡδύνατο incorrectly; but the LXX correctly omitted the words מֵאֵין יֵשֶׁב, which are not here suitable. Since the speaker understands by קָפַר, ver. 21, all the various things which he describes elsewhere, as ver. 19, more at length, he could construe it loosely with the plur., or, instead of it, with the fem. sing., § 318 b.

4. But then after a brief pause the above threat recurs, in purely prophetic and very emphatic language, only in a still more definite form, vv. 24-28. It is especially new in this threat that no one who with such unfaithfulness toward Yahvé took his name into his

mouth and professed outwardly to belong to his community (and this all the opponents of the prophet still desired to do in reality) shall remain unpunished, but rather this entire community in Egypt shall be cut off to its own dishonour, ver. 26.



30 ing you will be surely confirmed for evil : || thus saith Yahvé : behold I give Pharaoh Haphra' into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of his deadly foes, | as I gave Ssedeqia the king of Yuda into the hand of his enemy and deadly foe Nabukodrossor the king of Babel ! ||

5. And as a sign of the truth of this threat, let this be taken, that even the Egyptian king (how much more, therefore, his subjects and these weak exiles !) shall meet with a similar fate to that of Ssedeqia, *i.e.*, shall succumb to Nabukodrossor, vv. 29, 30 ; for it

follows immediately from xlv. 25, 26, that the prophet is not here thinking of the late Egyptian rebel and usurper *Amasis*, Herod. ii. 162. The expressions *his enemies* and *his enemy* interchange, ver. 30, merely for the sake of variety in the verse-members.

#### 4. *A new oracle concerning Egypt.*

Ch. xlv. 13-28, comp. *ante* p. 197.

xlvi.

13 The word which Yahvé spake to the prophet Yéremyá, when Nabukodrossor the king of Babel would come to smite the land of Egypt.

It appears from the form of this heading that the piece must be considered as having been spoken before the actual invasion of Egypt by Nabukodrossor. In the piece itself Nabukodrossor is also always described as coming, as threatening, vv. 18, 20, 26, after he has already subjugated the surrounding countries, ver. 14. And inasmuch as to a prophet like Yéremyá there was nothing belonging to Egypt that must seem so ruinous as its deeply rooted idolatry, in the very first of these three strophes of medium length the impending conflict is represented, just as Isa. ch. xix., as a conflict between the Egyptian Apis and Yahvé who is about to chastise this God (by Nabukodrossor), a conflict which considering the weakness of the Egyptian army that consisted of hired soldiers must be so much the less doubtful, vv. 14-18 ; the second strophe therefore already anticipates the captivity of the people as certain, vv. 19-23 *a*, until the third, not without a side reference to the

folly of the Israelites in trusting to such an insecure power, brings the whole to a conclusion, vv. 23b-26.

The words of comfort addressed to Israel, vv. 27, 28, have no real internal connexion with this piece, but are merely repeated from xxx. 10, 11, although perhaps by the first writer (Barûkh), quite at the end of the book in the same manner as a leading oracle was thus frequently repeated. In that case this is a remarkable indication that the piece once actually stood at the end of this large book, as in fact it was really Yéremyá's last piece.

## 1.

15 Tell ye in Egypt and publish in Migdol, and proclaim in Memphis and in T'haphanhes, | say : "stand thou and prepare thee ! for the sword hath devoured everything round about thee !" || —Wherefore is thy bull cast down ? | —he standeth not because Yahvé thrusteth him down ! || many become the stumblers, ye man falleth upon man, | so that they say "arise and let us return home to our people and our native land from before the destructive sword !" || They call the name of Pharaoh king of Egypt "Noise-whom-a-signal-removeth !" || As I live, saith the king whose name is Yahvé of Hosts : | surely as a Tabor among the mountains, and as Karmel in the sea will he come ! ||

1. In the whole of Egypt, particularly in the places inhabited by the exiled Israelites, xliii. 7, xliv. 1, let the inhabitants be summoned to prepare themselves for the impending war ! ver. 14. Already the prophet in spirit sees the bull of Egypt, the god Apis, cast down as by an irresistible hand, and how could that be possible except that Yahvé thrusts him down, ver. 15 ; already many are seen falling in battle, so that all the numerous foreigners in Egypt are driven full of fear to their native countries, ver. 16, comp. ver. 21, Nah. iii. 18, while the boastful titles of the king of Egypt might now be changed into the name "*Noise-whom-a sign-driveth-away*," only a signal

(מוֹעֵד as Judges xx. 38) from Yahvé to the world as his servant that knows his signs, and forthwith the wild, proud noise which this king makes ceases, ver. 17, comp. Isa. v. 14 : the true and eternal king Yahvé announces solemnly, that Nabukrodrossor, who is like a Tabor amongst the mountains, like a Karmel rising high above the sea (and as a fact Karmel looks the highest when seen from the sea), who towers above and brings down all, will come, ver. 18, comp. vv. 20, 26. Instead of אֲבִירִיךְ ver. 15 the better reading, acc. to many MSS. and the LXX, is אֲבִיר, אֲבִירֶךָ for *bull*, as Ps. l. 13 ; הִרְבָּה, ver. 16, is inchoative acc. §. 122 c. Ver. 17 also the LXX have the

## 2.

Material for captivity get thee thou citizen daughter Egypt! | for Memphis will become a desert, and desolate without an inhabitant. || —A marvellously fair calf is Egypt: |  
 20 the sea-monster from the North cometh cometh! || also its hired men within it which are like fatted calves—yea they also turn their face, flee together stand not, | because their day of calamity overtaketh them, the time of their punishment. || — It rustleth like the hissing snake, when men go with force and with axes come upon it, | when as wood-cutters cut down its forest! saith Yahvé.

## 3.

Although they be also unsearchable, | although they be more than grasshoppers and are innumerable: || yet the daughter

correct reading שֵׁם; the long name of the reigning Egyptian king which here receives a Hebrew form probably contains an allusion to his extensive

Egyptian titles, and in fact the sound of *Apries* appears to be found in העביר.

2. Egypt is now addressed as a country in the *fem.*: let her procure for herself the stuffs of a captive! the nature of which can be ascertained from Isa. ch. xx., comp. Ez. xii. 3. It may now like its god Apis leap and be gay as a wonderfully beautiful calf: but already the northern monster (קֶרֶץ) must be = Arab. *karsh*, probably some great, terrible monster of the deep) comes to devour it with ease, while the mercenary soldiers that are fed like fat calves forsake it in the time of need, vv. 20, 21. And if it were hidden like a snake in a thick forest, it would be still heard to flee like a hissing snake which, however, fierce and angry it may be, still quickly flees before the axe of the wood-cutters! vv. 22 and 23 *a*. Instead of ילך, ver. 22, it seems necessary to read שָׂרַק with the

LXX; instead of the second בָּא, ver. 20, some MSS. read בָּהּ with only an apparent improvement. — Since קֶרֶץ, which is also corresponding to the Arab. *karasa*, can signify to sting, קֶרֶץ, ver. 20, might seem rather to mean the *stinging-fly* (*Tsetse*), such flies being known at the present time to be fatal to cattle in Southern Africa. But in that case this unusual figure ought to have been distinctly carried out like the similar one, Isa. vii. 18, 19. We have in these few words only the antithesis between the small, elegantly beautiful calf and the monstrous, ravenous shark or whale (*carcharias*, the same word); and the same idea is also at the bottom of the other figures, ver. 18. Besides, the continuation of the description, ver. 21, is only thus explained.

3. Though therefore (בִּי §. 362 *b*) it may be like a forest of men that

cannot be searched for number (comp. Isa. ix. 18; x. 18, 34), or may seem

25 Egypt is ashamed, | will be given into the hand of the northern nation ! || Yahvé of Hosts Israel's God saith : behold I visit it upon 'Amôn of Memphis and Pharaoh and upon Egypt, | upon her gods and her kings, upon Pharaoh and them that trust in him, || and give them into the hand of their mortal enemies, and into the hand of Nabukodrossor king of Babel and his servants : || but afterwards it will flourish as in former days, saith Yahvé. ||

*But fear not thou my servant Yaqob, and be not dismayed Israel ! | for behold I help thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity, | that Yaqob returneth and resteth, and is secure without a disturber. || Fear thou not my servant Yaqob (saith Yahvé), for I am with thee ! | I make a full end with all the nations whither I have driven thee, only with thee I make not a full end, | but correct thee as is due, and leave thee not wholly unpunished. ||*

like grasshoppers with innumerable men (Náh. iii. 17), yet Egypt's honour and power belong to the past, vv. 23, 24, as is said finally vv. 25, 26 most

distinctly. The reversing conclusion has the same meaning as xlviii. 47 : xlix. 6, 39, but takes here another shape.



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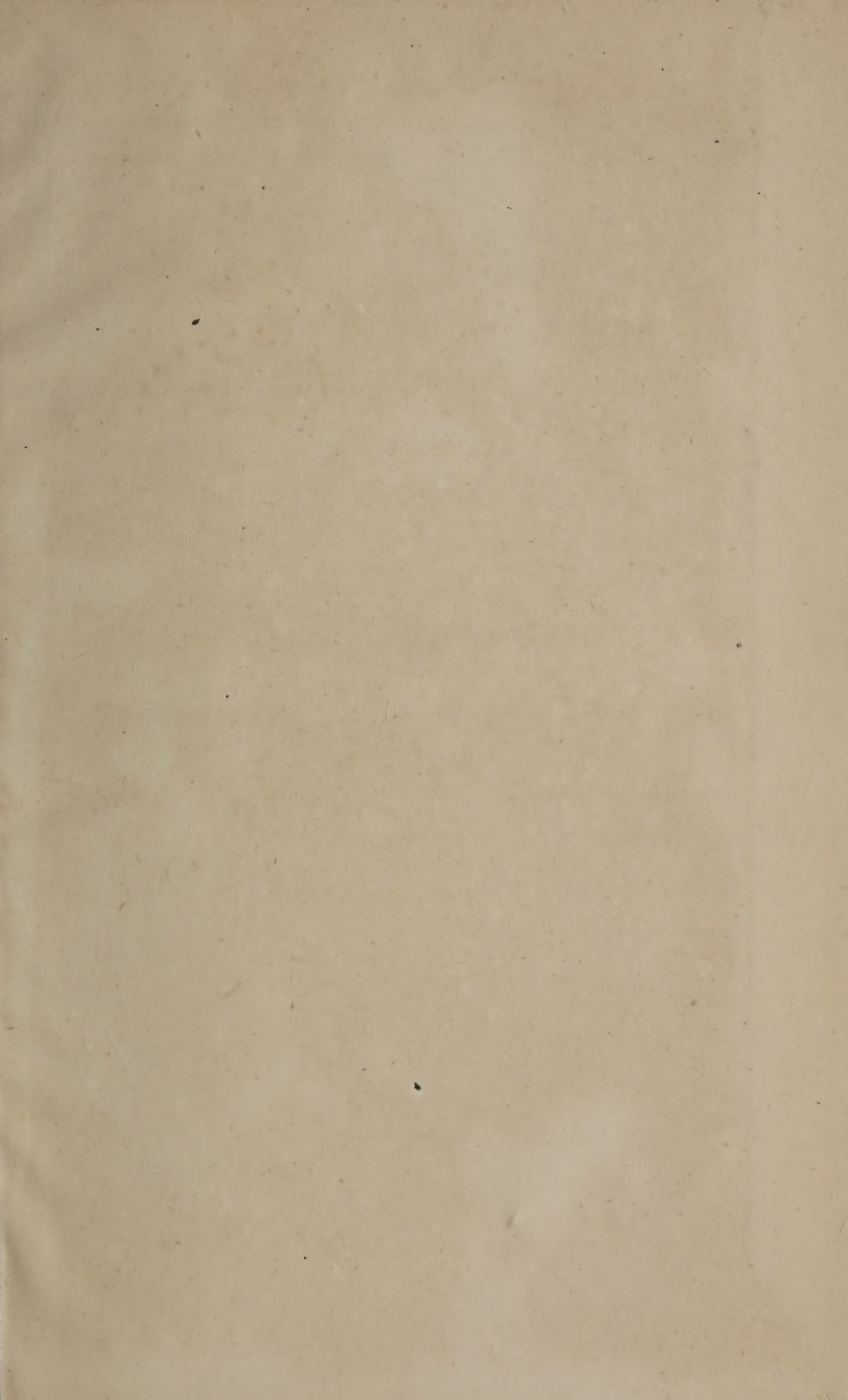
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